

THE "DEVOTIO MODERNA"

OR

CHRISTIAN RENAISSANCE

(1380-1520)

BY

ALBERT HYMA

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, IN
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

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PREFACE

The complete work, as indicated by the Table of Contents, contains eight chapters. Originally it included copies of several medieval Latin compositions, most of which are now being published in Dutch periodicals. The eight chapters, together with the original constitution of the Brethren of the Common Life at Deventer, will be published under the simple title of "The Christian Renaissance".

The book will have a Preface of about four pages, and a good Index. It will be ready within four months from the day the following parts appeared.



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INTRODUCTION

Somewhere among the wooded hills of Westphalia the little river known as Oude (or Old) Yssel takes its source. Descending through forest, heath, and meadow, on a northwestward course, it soon crosses the borders of Holland. Here both it and its neighbor the Rhine come up against the plateau Veluwe, or "Barren Meadow". Confronted by this plateau, the Oude Yssel turns northward, and for the rest of its course is called simply Yssel; while the Rhine turns mostly westward, but discharges about a ninth of the water with which it enters Holland into the Zuiderzee by way of the Yssel.

Once on a northward course, the river changes greatly in character. Slowly it winds past thriving cities — no longer an obscure little river, but a dignified stream whose quiet waters have nearly finished a long journey. The valley through which it now flows is very attractive, and is made doubly attractive by the striking contrast between the verdant meadows along the gentle waters and the dusty heaths of the Veluwe. Down in the valley are fertile banks with green pastures and smiling grain fields; on the plateau are stunted pines and barren sand-dunes. Below, the busy hand of man has planted willows and elms, has transformed the monotonous green into the radiant colors of flowers and shrubbery, and has built a multitude of homes; on the solitary heaths of the Veluwe few fragrant garden spots are found, few riversides, and few prosperous homes.

Four or five centuries ago, the contrast between the valley of the Yssel and its nearer environment was even stronger than now. For at that time the Veluwe, to the westward, was far more weird and forsaken. In spring and autumn, when the Rhine, Yssel, and Grebbe¹ overflowed their banks, it would appear like a huge sand heap, devoid of human and animal life. On stormy days the wind would shriek among the tops of the lonely pines and the sand would swirl through the air. This spectacle was in itself sufficient to frighten away most invaders. East of the Yssel the landscape was almost equally desolate. Three different zones could be distinguished there, parallel with the river. First came the fertile strip of land bordering the stream; then the sand hills with their extensive forests of oaks and pines, but not wholly without cultivation, particularly along the little brooks which had their source in the higher land farther to the east. The third zone was nothing but a waste of heaths, forests, and moors, showing but very few signs of human habitation².

In this valley were situated the cities of Deventer, Zutphen, and Kampen, with Zwolle close by. Deventer was near the centre. Bordered on both sides by lonely expanses of heath and fen, Deventer was only to a relatively small degree subjected to the influence of international commerce. True, it was a prosperous town, but not a mighty port like Bruges or Antwerp; nor was it exposed so much to foreign influences as were the cities of Utrecht, Leiden, Amsterdam, and Dordrecht. Did the green pastures and the silent waters encircling the town perhaps foster in religious men of Deventer that spirit of mysticism which attracted a Thomas à Kempis and impelled him to leave his home at distant Kempen for the Yssel country?

Great mystics have always loved to seek communion with God on the banks of quiet rivers, in forests and deserts. It was of such a country that David wrote: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul".

However this may be, the valley of the Yssel became the centre of a great religious movement,—the "*Devotio Moderna*", or "New Devotion", which developed the institution of the Brethren of the Common Life. It was in this valley that the "*Imitation of Christ*", next to the Bible the most widely read book in Europe, was composed. Here the "*Spiritual Ascensions*" was written by Gerard Zerbolt of Zutphen, as well as the "*Rosary of Spiritual Exercises*" by John Mombaer or Mauburn, which two works later had a profound influence on Ignatius Loyola. Not only did Loyola use Zerbolt's work as the pattern for his "*Spiritual Exercises*", but Luther gave it the highest praise, as will appear. In this valley also Gerlach Peters composed his "*Soliloquy*", which became the mystical text-book of the Port Royalists or Jansenists in France. Here John Cele lived, the first teacher to introduce the study of the Bible into the elementary schools. And here Gansfort and Erasmus acquired the ideals of reformation which they in turn passed on to Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin.

The "New Devotion" succeeded another religious movement, which had found its most perfect expression in the works of Bernard of Clairvaux, and Francis of Assisi; and in the cathedrals of Amiens, Rouen, Reims, Paris, Brussels, and Cologne. This movement had led to far-reaching monastic reforms; it had touched the hearts of the masses, inspiring them to rise to higher ideals

than the worship of self, and the amassing of material riches, honor, and fame among mortals. Learning had flourished in those days, and philosophy had been a living force. France had been the chief centre of this older movement; its monks had brought monastic reforms to the Low Countries and Germany; and its literature had served as a model; beautiful Gothic houses of worship had been erected, seldom if ever surpassed in grandeur and ennobling simplicity.

But the thirteenth century had been followed by the fourteenth, a century notable for its spirit of strife and discontent. National and dynastic wars had brought misery to Western Europe, and no country had suffered more than France. With the loss of economic strength came the gradual eclipse of France as a dominating force in the realms of learning, literature, and art³. And England was scarcely in a better position than its neighbor across the Channel⁴. The same can be said of the German Empire, where many disintegrating forces were gradually undermining the prosperity of the people⁵. And what of the Church? Was it not growing from bad to worse as time went on, the more the clergy neglected their duties? Everywhere a decline in moral standards was noticeable, and everywhere a reform was badly needed.

What Europe of the fourteenth century apparently lacked was some great Apostle, a man able to organize a lasting movement for reform; a man who could preach, write, and draw thousands of others behind him, who in their turn would preach, write, and found schools where the rising generation might learn the ideals of the great leader himself. It was the fortune of the Yssel valley to produce such a man; for Gerard Groote, the founder of the Brotherhood of the Common Life, not only preached

and wrote, but induced thousands of others to follow his example. He was the spiritual ancestor of Thomas à Kempis, Wessel Gansfort, Hegius, and Erasmus; the inaugurator of the "New Devotion", or Christian Renaissance. Through his influence the schools of Deventer and Zwolle were to become the seats of a revival of learning that was soon to spread all over Western Europe and be carried into the New World.

How did it happen that Groote and the movement he inaugurated became devoted to the reform of the schools as well as of the Church? Why did the "New Devotion", which, as has been said, was a religious movement, extend its influence to the realm of education, and why should one call it the "Christian Renaissance"? The word Renaissance means literally *rebirth*, and the term Christian Renaissance, therefore, should refer to a great rebirth of Christianity. At the same time it should denote some movement which, like the Italian Renaissance, produced a revival of learning. This was exactly the scope of the "New Devotion". Thus far it has been commonly believed that the revival of learning North of the Alps was a product of the Italian Renaissance. We shall consider whether this actually was the case; whether the reform of the schools at Deventer and Zwolle, and of those reformed after their pattern grew out of the Italian Renaissance; and whether Groote and Cele in 1374 were inspired by the Italians, or originated their own ideas.

Perhaps the physical geography of the Yssel valley had something to do with the twofold reform instituted by Groote and his followers. The cities in the Yssel country, though surrounded by immense heaths and moors, and situated somewhat apart from the busiest thoroughfares in the West, were nevertheless commercial

centres and shared in the prosperity of Bruges, Ghent, and Antwerp. They formed a part of the Low Countries, where from the days of Charlemagne until the end of the fifteenth century the currents of Western thought met and intermingled⁶. Through this middle region French monastic reforms, epics, and chivalry passed into Germany; and whatever ideas came from Germany to France traveled mostly by way of the Low Countries⁷.

It was here that intellectual as well as religious and commercial currents met and mingled; and from here they issued forth. The Flemish towns were the first in Transalpine Europe to supplant the monasteries as chief seats of learning and art⁸. Under the rule of the dukes of Burgundy, Bruges and Ghent became the wealthiest cities North of the Alps, not excepting Paris and London. In the middle of the fifteenth century the court at Bruges outshone even the court at Paris⁹. Then followed the rise of Antwerp and Brussels, which brought more wealth, more leisure, and consequently more learning to the Low Countries. Never before had the world seen such a port as Antwerp, since in this city for more than half of the sixteenth century nearly all the great routes of commerce converged,—something which has never happened before nor since in any other port¹⁰. The Low Countries, therefore, shared with Italy the honor of being the most opulent districts in Europe at the very time that the “New Devotion”, or Christian Renaissance made its influence felt throughout the West.

Just as France bought wares of Italy in the Low Countries, so did Paris receive many of the best fruits of the Italian Renaissance by way of the Low Countries. The same can to a large extent be said of Germany, Switzerland, England, and Scandinavia. How this “New Devotion”, or Christian Renaissance, between 1380 and

1520, absorbed the wisdom of the ancients, the essence of Christ's teachings, the mystic religion of the Fathers and the saints of medieval Europe, as well as the learning of the Italian humanists; how it assimilated all these ingredients and presented them in a new dress to the old world and the new, will be shown in the following pages.

CHAPTER I

GERARD GROOTE

I

Gerard Groote¹ was born at Deventer in the year 1340², the son of Werner Groote, a prominent "schepen", or magistrate³, and Heylwig van der Basselen⁴. At an early age he was sent to the parochial school in his native city, then to Aachen, and later to Cologne⁵. In 1355 he matriculated in the University of Paris, where he stayed three years, studying philosophy, medicine, Canon Law, and logic⁶. He also studied magic at that time, a fact which caused him much regret in later years⁷. In 1358 he obtained the degree of Master of Arts⁸, but remained some time at Paris after having secured the degree⁹. At Prague also he sought to improve his knowledge. How much time he spent there, however, the sources do not reveal. They merely inform us that he soon returned to Deventer¹⁰, where he won great distinction, as the magistrates asked him to represent them at the papal court at Avignon, to negotiate with Pope Urban V on a question of tolls and other dues¹¹. The mission proved successful. Not long after this he was living at Cologne in the enjoyment of the return from two prebends¹². Heedless of the masses, and without eyes for the many forms of corruption ruining the Church, he "walked in the ways of the world", according to Thomas à Kempis¹³.

One day, however, a mystic stopped Groote on the street and pointed out to him the wickedness of indulging in selfish delights. "Why do you stand here", he asked, "intent upon empty things? You ought to become another

man". The appeal made some impression on him, but not sufficient to alter his mode of life¹⁴.

A second warning came to him in his native city, where next we meet him. He was now living with his uncle, as his father had died some time before. There he fell very ill. Nevertheless, the pastor of his uncle's parish church refused to administer the sacrament of communion to him, for he refused to give up the study of astrology and magic. The illness grew worse until finally Groote thought his end was near. Suddenly he realized how many years he had spent in quest of self-aggrandizement. At Cologne in particular he had wasted his opportunities. Experience had taught him how great was the need of reform in every part and office of the Church. But he had paid no heed to the deplorable state of affairs among the clergy, especially in the higher ranks. Just as a drowning man in one brief moment reviews all the events of his past life, so did Groote on his sick-bed at Deventer go over the days of his lost youth. He had much reason to condemn himself. He ordered his books on magic to be burned, and it seemed as if he was henceforth to be a changed man. But no, as soon as the disease left him, his good resolutions vanished also. We may safely conclude, however, that the warnings he had received at Cologne and at Deventer prepared the way for his final conversion, which took place shortly after the illness at Deventer¹⁵.

In 1374 Groote and an old friend, named Henry of Calcar, met at Utrecht. They had both been students at Paris, where an intimate friendship had knitted their souls with ties of common ideals and aspirations. But Henry had already yielded to the warning voice of conscience, while Gerard still hesitated. After a long talk Groote was convinced of the necessity of amending his

life. This third and last appeal had struck home; it resulted in a complete conversion¹⁶. Firmly resolved to amend his ways, he returned to Deventer once more. First he gave up his two prebends¹⁷; next he ceded the use of his house to a few poor women¹⁸, keeping only two small rooms for his own use¹⁹; then he entered upon the task of mastering his lower self. A terrific struggle, indeed! Yet Groote did not fail. The greater the load of his former wrongs seemed to him, the greater his desire became to root up the last vestiges of his sin, and to replace the conquered vices by virtues.

Thus he battled for five long years²⁰, the last two of which he spent in the Carthusian monastery of Monnikhuizen near Arnhem, where his friend Henry of Calcar was then prior²¹. At Monnikhuizen Groote became an ascetic. Spurred on by the example of the other monks, he began to mortify the flesh, hoping thereby to overcome his sinful nature more rapidly and completely. His life at Monnikhuizen has been described by Thomas à Kempis: "Dressing in a long and coarse garment of hair-cloth, totally abstaining from the use of flesh and other lawful things, and passing a considerable portion of his nights in watching and prayer, he forced his feeble body into complete subservience to the spirit"²². The Carthusian monks were delighted with their enthusiastic disciple. Groote was never able thereafter wholly to escape from their influence, although his writings and his acts after 1379 reveal a changed attitude, which was further developed by his disciples after he had passed away.

There was one other person who exerted a considerable influence upon Groote during the period of his spiritual struggles. This was John Ruysbroeck, prior of Groenedaal, the Augustinian monastery in the forest of Soignies, near Brussels²³. Spending most of his time out of doors,

a friend of birds and flowers, a lover of the contemplative life, he had tried to solve the mysteries of the universe, and had learned much. "Before I saw you", he told Groote, "I knew you were coming". He found a responsive listener in Groote, but the latter was unable to follow Ruysbroeck's theories of the kingdom of heaven, the secret of love, the union of the human soul or spirit with God, the various stages of the active and the contemplative life, the hierarchy of angels, and kindred subjects. Groote had not yet made much progress in mysticism as an abstract system of thought. And Ruysbroeck knew that. Therefore he said to Groote: "Some day you will understand"²⁴.

The first visit by Groote to Groenendaal must have taken place in the year 1375 or 1376. Groote had brought one of his most intimate friends with him, named John Cele, rector of the school at Zwolle²⁵, the teacher who was to inaugurate the reformation of the schools in the Netherlands and Western Germany. We know much about Groote's friendship with Cele and shall see his influence in Cele's work.

In 1379 Groote's years of preparation were at an end. The Carthusian monks of Monnikhuizen, astonished at his gifts of argumentation and persuasion, told him that so great a light of religious ardor as he possessed should no longer remain beneath the roof of their little monastery, and advised him to go out among the people and preach²⁶. This advice Groote gladly followed. But he had too much reverence for the priesthood to don the garb of such an exalted calling²⁷, and thought the rank of deacon good enough for him. Consequently he was ordained deacon shortly before the first of January, 1380, by the Bishop of Utrecht²⁸.

Beginning with the cities near the Yssel, he preached

the gospel of repentance at Deventer, Zwolle, Kampen, Zutphen, Amersfoort, Amsterdam, Haarlem, Leiden, Utrecht, Gouda, Delft, Ghent, and many smaller places²⁹. He labored in the spirit of John the Baptist, says Thomas à Kempis, laying the axe to the root of the tree. His magnetic personality, burning zeal to win souls, and power of conviction carried their message straight to the heart. The people came for miles to hear him, many of them leaving their work unfinished and their meals untouched. The huge churches in the larger cities did not have enough room to hold the surging crowds³⁰. Remembering his own experiences, he warned the people of a future which might bring bitter regret and severe punishment. He addressed the clergy in Latin, the masses in the vernacular³¹.

One day Groote addressed a considerable group of clerical dignitaries at Utrecht, and reproved them severely for their most flagrant sins: immorality, simony, and laziness mental and physical³². He had himself seen the evils that were undermining the Church, for he had been a monk himself, and before that had held two prebends, so was quite familiar with the state of affairs in his day. He had personal acquaintance with a great many priests, and fully realized how widely hypocrisy, immorality, greed, and self-indulgence were rampant among all ranks of the hierarchy. Many were wolves in the form of shepherds, as he knew, and said that he knew!

But Groote was equally concerned about the people, the wandering sheep, who were roaming about without the guiding help of their spiritual guardians, and exhorted them to be directed by their own consciences. For they possessed the reflex image of divinity within their breasts. He preached to them about Christ's commandments, and urged them to imitate the life of Christ, as he, Groote,

himself was trying to do. To love God above all things, and one's neighbors as one-self, those were the two commandments, he said. We should try to eradicate vice and supplant it with newly acquired virtues, for we human beings, having been endowed with a spark of divinity, are not totally depraved. We should purge the impure flesh in which the soul condescends to dwell until our body's death. Our soul should be allowed no longer to remain obscured by the dense mists of sin woven around it by evil thoughts, words, and deeds. Man has fallen low, but he does not have to remain in the dust. Let him realize the tremendous possibilities of future glory or future punishment. He must choose, and is free to choose, though all his acts have been predestined from eternity.

With this appeal to all classes of men and women Groote aimed to teach others what he had already experienced himself. Instinctively the people felt that a new prophet had appeared, a man of extraordinary experience and power. As he went from town to town, he sent one of his disciples ahead to post the announcement of his intended address on the church door³³. Then the people would come and look, tell their neighbors about the great news, and make the necessary preparations to hear the sermon. The farmer would hear of it, and take his family to town, leaving his crops to take care of themselves; shops were closed, almost everybody came.

Wherever Groote came to preach, a group of men and women, aroused from apathy, changed their lives and continued his work in their locality by personal example and appeal, and by lending religious books to their neighbors³⁴. This was the beginning of the great religious movement, named "Devotio Moderna", or New Devotion, which will be the subject of our study. In Deventer, Zwolle, Kampen, Zutphen, Doesburg; also in Arnhem,

Utrecht, Amsterdam, Haarlem, Leiden, and Delft the fires of devotion were kept burning brightly after Groote had passed on. He himself gathered about him a band of twelve disciples at Deventer³⁵. Among this number was a young man of about thirty, named Florentius Radewijns, who had given up his prebend at Utrecht to be in closer touch with Groote³⁶. In Deventer he was vicar of the altar of St. Paul in the church of St. Lebwin³⁷, and soon it became a custom for Groote's followers to hold meetings in the vicar's house. A few of them came to live with him³⁸, while others followed Groote on his journeys³⁹, or remained at home⁴⁰. These meetings in the house of Radewijns were the earliest visible beginnings of the society or congregation of the Brethren of the Common Life⁴¹.

Groote continued his labors as itinerary preacher till the year 1383. His success had been great, but he had made many enemies among the mendicants and the secular clergy, by pointing out the evils among them. They were the more exasperated because with his great learning and his pure, unselfish mode of life he had easily confounded their wits. Their temporary defeat engendered a jealous, spiteful hatred for the man who had so boldly attacked them⁴². They went to the Bishop of Utrecht and made their complaint; they told him that Groote had attacked and denounced them; and that he had tried to lead the masses away from the folds of the Church. Now the sheep were leaving their true shepherds, they said, in order to follow after a man who was not even a priest. Should not such a person be commanded to stop preaching entirely? The bishop listened and assented. No deacon was henceforth to preach in public; Groote was silenced⁴³.

But Groote, though he obeyed the edict, decided not to sit idle in the future. His friends appealed to the pope⁴⁴.

In the meantime Groote continued to write. The end of his mortal life was near, but this last year at Deventer may perhaps be considered the most important one in the history of the great religious revival which he inaugurated. He now had more time to reflect upon his past, to instruct his followers, and to speak oftener with the teachers and pupils of the cathedral school. Several boys and young men were employed by him to copy books. Whenever he had a chance, he talked to them about some religious subject, trying to win them for the kingdom of God. They were the material most needed, he thought, for the reform of the Church⁴⁵. Religion and learning must go hand in hand. The clergy ought to receive a liberal education before assuming the leadership of the people. Teachers, on the other hand, would do well to include religious instruction among the other subjects taught by them. These boys, said Groote to himself, will some day be leaders among men. Some of them will enter monasteries, others will teach; one or two among them are likely to become merchants or magistrates, while a few others may rise to the priesthood, or even higher. While their characters are still pliable, the ardor of youth in their veins, it is time to fill their minds with noble ambitions. Hence Groote gladly devoted a considerable share of his energy to the religious training of school boys. He was assisted in this undertaking by his followers, both at Deventer⁴⁶, and at Zwolle⁴⁷. Thus the foundations were laid for the great revival of learning which was started and supervised by the Brethren of the Common Life.

In 1383 Groote entered also upon a new task. It was not enough, he said, that the clergy be educated. The people too must read and decide for themselves. Religion should be personal for all men and women. What good

does it do, he reasoned, for a layman merely to go to church? Will that cure his spiritual ills? Certainly not. He must do more than listen to his preacher; he must read and think for himself. And in order to make this possible, he began to translate portions of the Bible and a great many church hymns into the vernacular, at the same time providing these translations with glosses and other explanations⁴⁸.

A pestilence broke out at Deventer in the summer of the year 1384. One of Groote's followers, named Lambert Stuerman, caught the disease. Groote felt it incumbent upon him to visit his beloved friend and became infected himself. There was no hope of recovery; on the 20th of August he passed away⁴⁹. But his ideals and his plans did not die with him, as will appear.

II

Groote had gleaned part of his knowledge from the Bible, the writings of Albert Magnus, Ambrose, Anselm, Antony, Apuleius, Aristotle, Augustine, Bede, Bernard of Clairvaux, Boethius, Bonaventura, Cassianus, Cato, Chrysostom, Cicero, Climacus, Cyprian, Demosthenes, Dionysius, Eusebius, Fabricius, Francis of Assisi, Gregory, Gregory of Nianza, Henry of Ghent, Hippocrates, Isidor, Jerome, Juvenal, Lucan, Lyra, Nepos, Permenianus Donatista, Peter of Damiani, Plato, Pliny, Seneca, Socrates, Suetonius, Suso, Theophrastus, Thomas Aquinas, Valerius, Vegetius, Virgil, and the Canon Law with its commentaries⁵⁰.

Another field of knowledge was the contact with his friends, of whom John Ruysbroeck was one. It was he who had initiated Groote into the mysterious realm of the contemplative life: "The creature is in Brahma and Brahma is in the creature; they are ever distinct yet ever

united', says the Indian mystic. Were it translated into Christian language, it is probable that this thought — which does not involve pantheism — would have been found acceptable by Ruysbroeck, for the interpenetration yet eternal distinction of the human and divine spirits is the central fact of his universe. Man, he thinks, is already related in a three-fold manner to his Infinite Source, for we have our being in him, as the Father, we contemplate him as does the Son, we ceaselessly tend to return to him as does the Spirit. So the Superessential Life is the simple, the synthetic life, in which man actualises at last all the resources of his complex being. The active life of response to the Temporal Order, the contemplative life of response to the Transcendent Order are united, firmly held together, by that eternal fixation of the spirit, the perpetual willed dwelling of the being of man within the Incomprehensible Abyss of the Being of God, *qui est per omnia saecula benedictus*. 'To this divine vision but few men can attain, because of their own unfitness and because of the darkness of that Light whereby we see, and therefore no one shall thoroughly understand this perception by means of any scholarship, or by own acuteness of comprehension. For all words, and all that men may learn and understand in a creaturely fashion, is foreign to this and far below the truth that I mean' ⁵¹.

Groote, also, became a mystic. His mysticism, however, differed considerably from that of his aged friend. In spite of his great reverence for Ruysbroeck⁵², he could never persuade himself to adopt those views which the church of Rome considered heretical⁵³. From the day of his conversion at Utrecht in 1374 Groote saw very little value in abstract thinking. He never became more than a distant admirer of Ruysbroeck, and similarly

refused to subscribe to the views of the scholastic philosophers. He was not a Thomist, though he has been thought one⁵⁴. In his opinion Thomas Aquinas wasted a great deal of time on topics of no practical value whatsoever. There is but one work of Groote left in which he enunciates purely philosophical views. This is the "Sermon, or Treatise, on the Birth of Christ", which in all probability he addressed to a learned body of clerics. In this sermon he most explicitly disapproves of scholastic philosophy⁵⁵, and does not mention the name of Thomas Aquinas, while in many of his other works he only refers to this philosopher as an authority on theological or moral questions, never as a philosopher whose views he admires. At least two subsequent leaders of the "New Devotion" likewise warned their followers against the writings of Aquinas. One of these was John Vos of Heusden, a disciple and intimate friend of Groote's.

The theology and philosophy of Gerard Groote was based chiefly upon the New Testament, and the Fathers; in a lesser degree also upon the works of Greek, Roman, and medieval philosophers. If we are to compare his ideas with those of any other philosopher, we might say that his works betray the exceedingly powerful influence of Augustine. And if we are to give a name to Groote's philosophy, we might safely call it Augustinian.

With Adam the whole human race fell, says Groote⁵⁶. There have been wise men like Solomon, humble men like David, strong men like Samson, yet every one of these was but a shadow of what he might have been⁵⁷. Man, created in the image of God, has fallen low, unspeakably low. Once enjoying the pure reflex light of divinity, he now is no longer able to fathom the mysteries of life. His fall was the inevitable result of disobedience to the "Lex Dei", the immutable law of God. When-

ever man disobeys that law, he sins, for sin is disobedience⁵⁸. And since the "Lex Dei" is the highest of all laws, one should never obey the command of any man, be he the pope himself, if such a command should oppose God's law; for is not the pope also subject to the "Lex Dei"⁵⁹? Before the Fall, man had this law engraved in his heart, but since that time his intellect has grown dim, and the more he sins, the further he is removed from the "suprema ratio", or supreme source of wisdom⁶⁰. God is the Alpha and the Omega, from whom all things develop, and to whom they all return, either in a natural way or through grace⁶¹. Sin obscures the intellect, evil enfeebles the will; slowly the light of wisdom vanishes as the obstinate sinner turns farther and farther away from the supreme Law-giver, who offers peace and joy through humble obedience.

But man is not wholly depraved. He still possesses a small spark of divinity within his breast, a radiant gleam of light, which may be fanned into a bright flame⁶². God is a spirit, and all who worship him must obey the voice of their spirits. We should aim to cultivate the inner life, for the kingdom of heaven is within us, as Christ said; here in the innermost depths of our hearts we may find the voice of God⁶³. Similarly, the kingdom of evil is also within us, for from the corrupt heart of man come forth all sinful thoughts. He who cannot control his inner life will never succeed in governing his outward acts⁶⁴. Let us therefore endeavor to silence the forces of evil, and listen to the Father's voice. It is God alone who can convert the sinful heart⁶⁵. Happy the man that has decided to make room within his heart for Christ, who is continually knocking at the door, patiently waiting for a response. And if the door is once opened, when Christ enters with his sweet conversation,

then the wisdom from heaven will fill that human temple with the peace which passes all understanding⁶⁶. "When I read the psalms", said Groote to his friend, John Brinckerinck, "hidden manna is flowing into my inner self, so that I experience no fatigue in reading, but sweet rapture instead"⁶⁷. Groote constantly urged his disciples to seek communion with God the Father, a spiritual communion with a spiritual God. For God is the "summum bonum"; if we have him, we have all goodness; if we lose him, nothing but evil is left unto us. And why? Because that part of us which is divine cannot exist without the life-giving contact with him who alone can sustain life and nourish our inner selves⁶⁸.

Hence the need Groote felt in common with all other mystics to remain in touch with God. As a Christian mystic he sought this contact through Christ⁶⁹. He made it a point to attend mass every day. "Let me first seek the kingdom", he thought, "and then I shall so much the better be able to serve my neighbor". Consequently he would stay till the end of the mass as often as possible to partake of the communion⁷⁰. It was also his habit to withdraw himself several times a day from the busy life of the outer world for prayer, surrendering himself wholly to God, saying: "Here I am Lord; teach me to do thy will, make mine conform to thine"⁷¹. As a mystic Groote maintained that the reading of good books should at all times be supplemented by meditation and prayer, for contact with God himself he considered the only way of obtaining the highest wisdom⁷². Whenever he was conscious of this contact between himself and God, his "soul would leap with joy". Songs of thanksgiving would escape from his fervent lips, for at such moments "that wonderful peace promised by Christ would settle upon him"⁷³.

And what is the tie which unites man with his maker? Groote held that it is love, and love only. "Try to love", he said, "for in loving you shall find the kingdom of heaven"⁷⁴. If once you have found this kingdom, you will enjoy righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Without these three gifts all outward show of piety, such as fasting, and mortification of the flesh, will be of no avail"⁷⁵. But how is one to show one's love for God? By sitting in one's cell, aloof from the outside world? Not at all, for he who really loves God, loves all of God's creatures. "Although one should avoid too much idle conversation with 'worldly people'⁷⁶, one ought never to shun their presence, but work among them, trying to make them also participants of the joys celestial, far superior as they are to any delights bestowed by our bodily senses"⁷⁷. Groote had tasted the supreme felicity love brings to all those who cheerfully lay their dearest treasures upon the altar of self-sacrifice"⁷⁸. Thomas à Kempis tells that "when Groote felt the force of love in his heart, his soul would sing with joy, and his spirit, as a flame, was borne upward to God"⁷⁹. Groote constantly exhorted his disciples to cast out jealousy for sympathy, spite for charity, rancor for love. "Close your eyes to your neighbor's defects", he would say, "and try to discover his good qualities, which are always worth considering; nay more than that, they are the only side of his character it is well for you to dwell upon"⁸⁰. For our soul's health can only be sustained by thoughts of love. And strange to say, the more love we spend, the more we receive, together with much joy in the spirit. We must also fight melancholy, despondency, dejectedness: these are the enemies of our spiritual existence"⁸¹. Groote found it quite easy to love even his enemies, after once having tasted the heavenly bliss which attends every act

of whole-hearted forgiveness⁸². "The health of his soul", says Thomas à Kempis, "gave to his food a savor beyond that of any pleasant meat. He sent away his guests joyful in the Lord"⁸³.

Groote was more than a philosopher, more than a mere mystic. He carried on an active campaign against the dying scholasticism of his day. "Why should we indulge in those endless disputes", he would say, "such as are held at the universities, and that about subjects of no moral value whatsoever"? "Do not therefore attend court", he advised, "and if you are asked to go, send a substitute"⁸⁴. When he referred to the works of philosophers, he always singled out those passages which had practical value. Among the philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome he preferred men like Plato, Socrates, and Seneca, who had endeavored to solve certain moral problems for the benefit of their fellow-men. "Words merely serve to convey our thoughts to others", he wrote one day; "they are the servants, not the masters of sense and expression"⁸⁵.

The same spirit which impelled Groote to attack the decadent scholasticism of his time induced him also to combat indolence, physical as well as mental. He wanted no women to live in his house at Deventer, for example, who did not want to gain their own livelihood with their own hands. "At present", he wrote in a certain letter, "I am firmly resolved to accept no one who is able to work, but wants to beg for her meals somewhere in the city. All those shall work who are in a condition to do so, and if the time should come when they cannot perform manual labor any longer, then it will be early enough for them to accept alms. This I say, because labor is necessary for the well-being of mankind. In trying to avoid physical exertion, these women fall into the danger

of idleness, thereby forgetting the study of their own inner selves, and wander from house to house, inquisitive and restless, prying into other people's affairs, ignoring their own duties''⁸⁶. On the ground of indolence Groote also attacked the mendicant friars, who in return showed him and his followers after him no small amount of hostility⁸⁷.

What Groote wanted was more Christianity, plain and simple. To follow in the footsteps of Christ, to bear his cross in humble submission, that was Groote's aim⁸⁸. For that reason he gave up his prebends, ceded his house to some devout women, and compassed land and sea to tell others about Christ's message; he tried to return good for evil, to treat the obstinate with patience, the suffering with sympathy, the impudent with forbearance. Thus he labored for three years and a half, loved by the masses, and followed by thousands of grateful disciples. He was not a profound scholar, not a great philosopher. The subtle arguments of the learned doctors at Paris, Cologne, and Prague he regarded as foolishness. He sought nothing but the conversion of sinners, the formation of a harmoniously developed character on the part of his disciples, and the extension of God's kingdom on earth. Groote was neither Thomist, nor Scotist; he did not imitate Ruysbroeck as a lover of solitary nooks in forest or monastery, but preferred a life of action among men. He wanted to be a Christian, and the movement he set on foot was a Christian Renaissance.

III

Groote was deeply concerned about the Church. Indeed, among the reformers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries he occupies a leading position. Few men were so well acquainted with the decline in moral stan-

dards among all ranks of the clergy as he, and very few, if any, so bitterly lamented the impending collapse of the Church. Instead of ignoring the dangers which were threatening the Church from within, he sought to stay the evil by attacking those who were the cause of the wide-spread demoralization: monks, priests, and bishops, as well as common people. He tried to rouse them all from their mental and spiritual lethargy.

In the first place he endeavored to extend the meaning of the word "religio", which in his time was not the equivalent of the English word *religion*, but served to distinguish the monks, or regular clergy, from other people. He protested against the wrong interpretation of the word "religio". "If devout women", he wrote, "separate themselves from the world, and try to serve God in the privacy of their homes, without taking monastic vows, they are just as religious as the nuns in their convents. To love God and worship him is religion, not the taking of special vows. For the cause and purpose of things give them their names and forms. If it is, therefore, one's aim to live a religious life, his way of living becomes religious in God's opinion, and according to the judgment of our consciences"⁸⁹. On another occasion he said: "Truly religious men are not confined by place, time, or manner of men"⁹⁰. "All these", he continued, "who live aloof from the world to serve God, who despise temporal honors; leading chaste lives, obedient and poor: they are religious people"⁹¹.

"No one may found a new religious order", continues Groote, "without the pope's permission, but it is not wrong, I believe, for two or more persons to live together in observance of certain established rules, or the rule of all rules, namely, the blessed Gospel; that is not forbidden, I think. The mere name 'religio' signifies but little;

it is not the name which determines the nature of a thing. Names are conventional. Therefore, the 'Horologium'⁸² is right in saying: 'Many so-called religious people go about in cowls and wear other outward garbs of religio, but within they are lions, bears,—terrible beasts'. There are many who are not protected by the name 'religio', and yet they may be more religious than those whom the Church calls religious"⁸³.

In the year 1379 Groote left the monastery, and never returned to it. Did he afterwards perhaps cherish so much reverence for the monastic life that he never dared to enter a monastery again⁸⁴? We know that he had great respect for a pious monk who left his friends and relatives for the sole purpose of worshiping God more perfectly. Whenever he made acquaintance with persons who showed a burning desire to come into closer relation to God, and seemed to be eminently fitted for the monastic state, he did not hesitate to praise and recommend monasticism⁸⁵. To others, who had taken monastic vows, he was accustomed to write frequently, reminding them of the reason why they entered the monastery. Since they had decided to serve God in comparative seclusion, they should no longer indulge in gossip, but should close their ears to rumors, quarrels, wars, and festivals; they should live soberly, and perform their daily tasks with alacrity⁸⁶. Many other examples might be adduced to show that Groote approved of monasticism⁸⁷, though his approval was not unqualified. Some people seemed to be particularly well fitted for the monastic life, but not he, nor those among his disciples whose ability to instruct the young, to preach to the masses, to remind the clergy of their shortcomings, or to comfort the poor and the afflicted, impelled them to employ their talents in the service of their neighbors, instead of burying them in

the solitude of a lonely cell. Hence we find him writing to one of his followers: "I dare not advise you to enter a monastery, though it is not for me to judge, being ignorant of God's ways. My desire is that you remain in the world, and be not of the world"⁹⁸. When John Cele, rector of the school at Zwolle, wanted to discontinue his work as teacher and become a monk, Groote urged him to remain at Zwolle, where he was doing such splendid work, not only among the school boys, but also as a preacher⁹⁹. Though Groote perfectly understood and never failed to appreciate the merits of monasticism, he was by no means blind to the laxity of discipline noticeable in nearly all monasteries. Monks were not less prone to sin than other men¹⁰⁰. Hence he vigorously attacked the greatest monastic evils: immorality, simony, and indolence¹⁰¹.

Groote's attitude towards the secular clergy and the Church in general was that of a reformer, not that of a revolutionist. He did not engage in negative criticism alone, as many of the humanists did, but supplemented his criticism with constructive plans. He was not satisfied with conditions as he had himself seen them at Deventer, Aachen, Cologne, Paris, Utrecht, and Avignon, for he loved the Church too much not to be grieved at its dangerous condition. However, he did not attack the doctrines or dogma of the Church. "Everything I have preached is in complete accordance with the teachings of the Church", he wrote; "wherever I have been wrong I shall gladly retract. I submit myself to the authority (judgment) of the Church"¹⁰².

The Church, in Groote's opinion, was a divine institution; its teachings were promulgated by servants of God, who had been inspired by the Holy Ghost. In the realm of dogma or doctrine, therefore, the Church was

supreme, and its teachings infallible. Although he drew a careful distinction between the Bible and other religious writings, he did not go so far as later reformers and say: "I submit myself only to the authority of the Scriptures", for he was firmly convinced that since Christ had promised to remain with his church until the end, it would be preposterous for him to lay claim to a better knowledge of the Bible than the Church Fathers and the medieval saints possessed¹⁰³.

Groote never dreamed of calling the Church supreme in the realm of morals, however, for he said: "There are some men to-day who exalt the judgments of the Church, because to them they are better known than the commandments of God, or the laws of nature, since they are ignorant of these laws, due to the darkness of their hearts; they are disposed, as were the Scribes and Pharisees, to transgress the law for the sake of human traditions, or the regulations of the Elders, for the instructions of the Church are more familiar to them than the laws of nature, or the commandments of God"¹⁰⁴. Far from wishing to break the Church, he deplored the schism within the Church and exclaimed: "I wish that both popes with all their cardinals would sing a 'Gloria in excelsis' in heaven, and that a true Eliakim would bring peace and harmony upon earth"¹⁰⁵. This schism cannot be healed without some terrible blow to the Church, which has long been in a position of decrepitude, ready to fall to pieces, and now the head itself is in a sad condition"¹⁰⁶.

The most exalted office a man could fill on earth, in Groote's eyes, was the cure of souls, and even the pope was a greater man as priest than as head of the Church¹⁰⁷. Consequently the worst form of simony was that of accepting or dispensing such a benefice for money. The cure of souls should be a thing quite

spiritual, quite divine¹⁰⁸. And it should be a bishop's duty to appoint for these spiritual tasks only men who had been endowed with a clear mind, whose hearts were pure, and whose aims were unselfish. If a bishop could not find trustworthy shepherds for his sheep, he had better resign his office, in spite of all the regulations found in the Canon Law and all the laws enacted by the Church¹⁰⁹.

Groote's views on the sacraments are closely allied with his opinion regarding the duties of the clergy. "If the pope should command you", he says to the lower clergy, "or a bishop, or any other superior, under whatever form of penalty, even that of excommunication, suspension, deposition, or privation, to administer the Holy Supper, and you have not repented of certain mortal sins, no human law of obedience can compel you to do it; on the other hand, you should refuse to administer the sacrament in question, heedless of all temporal loss or calumny¹¹⁰. For the laws and regulations of the Church are on the same level with those enacted by all human agencies"¹¹¹. "The sacraments", continues Groote, "have power independent of the priest who administers them, and his sins have no effect on the nature of the sacrament; all one's pollutions are taken away by one's faith in Christ, nor can any sinner pollute the divine sacraments"¹¹².

As for the sacrament of penance, no priest, says Groote, has the right to forgive any sins of any person who has not confessed all his evil deeds and decided never, if possible, to repeat them again. For if the sinner intends no repentance, absolution is idle; in such cases the priest must repeal his pronouncement of forgiveness. The sole condition required in this transaction is the sinner's repentance. All the priest can do is to act when the sinner is sincere in his confession and has resolved to amend

his evil ways¹¹³. Great caution is required of him, for suppose he forgives sins which God as yet cannot forgive, what benefit will the sinner receive? The priest presents the sinner to the Church as absolved from his load of sin, whereas the Church Triumphant or the Immaculate Church, that is, the inner circle of true believers terrestrial as well as celestial, refuses to accept him. He is introduced at the outer gate, but is repelled by those within the enclosure¹¹⁴. The priest's chief aim should be to convert sinners, for the conversion of sinners is a greater work than the creation of the world. "I believe", said Groote, "that prayer is more beneficial than mechanical rules and transactions; admonition is better than absolution, for after all it is God alone who can convert sinners¹¹⁵. Suppose somebody takes his neighbor's property, and is unrepentant, then all his confessions are of no avail, and every one who absolves him is simply a servant of the devil"¹¹⁶.

Groote was here taking a stand that later made Luther famous. It should be noted that Groote had no desire to break away from the Church. He even tried to silence four "heretics". In one of his letters we find him addressing a certain "Brother John", who had preached against him at Zutphen, Zwolle, and Kampen. "Your words were full of idle boasting and blasphemy", he tells him; "thus far I have suffered you to continue, but now I can stand it no longer. You shall retract, else I shall take you before the Roman Curia. Beware, if you still persevere in your obstinate course, after these friendly warnings"¹¹⁷. John probably heeded Groote's warning, but the other three men Groote attacked publicly. One of them was Bartholomew, an Augustinian friar from Dordrecht, a friend and to a great extent a follower of a curious sect, known as the "Free Spirits"¹¹⁸, who

preached the following doctrines: "God is neither life, nor light, nor nature. The divine essence is my essence, and my essence is divine essence. Just as man cannot exist without God, God is unable to live without man's aid. Divinity is dependent on man. Man is perfect God. Man from eternity is God in God. Man is never born, but has existed from eternity. The aim of every man should be to lose himself in the Nothingness of the Godhead; then he will be like Christ, both God and man. Every man, therefore, is saved through the immanence of the Holy Ghost, not through Christ's sacrifice. There is only one sin: to remain under the law of good works, rewards, and punishment; consequently there is but one virtue: to free oneself from these. And again, there is no evil in such imaginary sins as lust, pride, theft, hatred"¹¹⁹. Groote wanted to silence preachers who taught such doctrines. "Bartholomew enters inns", he wrote, "and gets many friends there, for he finds fault with no one. Nothing is so dangerous as to preach about God and perfection, and not to point out the way which leads to perfection. Penitence is hardly necessary in his opinion; tell him that if he is to preach any longer, he must show the people the way to heaven through Christ by following in his footsteps, not by ignoring the imperfection of man, and the existence of sin. I mean to listen to him in secret with a notary public, catch him at his game, and make it impossible for him to continue his present work as servant of the devil"¹²⁰. After some delay he finally succeeded in having Bartholomew silenced by the Bishop of Utrecht¹²¹.

From the day of Groote's conversion he never was a friend of the mendicant monks, for he hated indolence. "It is well for a true Christian", he would say. "to cede his possessions to the poor. This will compel him to

work for his daily bread¹²². Poverty without begging is a boon to the pilgrim, for he should be freed from all temporal encumbrances¹²³. Man is only a steward here on earth, wherefore it is his duty to confine his expenditures to a small minimum¹²⁴. Why should one be jealous of one's neighbor who is leading a life of luxury¹²⁵? Groote himself had spent all his possessions for the extension of God's kingdom upon earth. So little, in fact, he had reserved that sometimes he had to ask one of his friends for a small loan¹²⁶. In his poverty he aimed to imitate Christ. "O Lord of all riches", he exclaimed, "why didst thou elect such humble garments? Why didst thou choose to sit on an ass which was found tied to a gate near a public road, upon which even the humblest man was free to ride, and worse, on a colt upon whose back no man had ever sat, as it had thus far been used for the meanest sorts of employment? Rejoice, ye poor ones, for this seeming poverty is but a guise, since he, though poor in earthly goods, was master of all, magnificent, royal, divine! Follow in his footsteps, ascend the road which leads from ignominy to glory, from toil and strife to peace and rest, to heights sublime"¹²⁷.

All obstacles should be removed which might in any way obstruct his path, wherefore he deemed it best for men such as he not to marry or to be at all familiar with women. He shunned them himself: to the women in his house he never spoke except through a closed and curtained window¹²⁸. Basing his views upon certain passages found in the New Testament and in the writings of St. Augustine¹²⁹, he exhorted the lower clergy who wished to serve God above all things not to marry¹³⁰: "Marriage is a hindrance to him who intends to develop his spiritual nature, for it brings sorrows of its own,

as well as joys, cares, and much worldly thought. There are many men who have had to give up their career as scholar or philosopher, as the inevitable result of their friendships with women"¹³¹.

To those for whom he thought marriage fitting, he also offered serious counsel. His disciples should choose devout wives, — chaste, virtuous, and true, — and one must not assume that he can draw an ungodly woman to God¹³². The marriage tie is sacred, for marriage is a symbol of the eventual union between Christ and his church. Therefore it is a man's duty to love his wife as much as the church is loved by Christ; he has no right to frequent inns and loaf about town at night. Christ does indeed love his church, and readily forgives the sins of his beloved, as husbands and wives should remember, cover each other's defects, avoid quarrels and ill-feeling. For perfect love hides all the faults of its object¹³³.

It would not be right to call Groote a pessimist. He thought that it was always best to dwell more upon the hope of eternal glory rather than upon the pains of hell¹³⁴. As for the theory of good works, he wrote: "Christ would rather see a wife obedient to her husband and quietly performing her daily tasks than any ascetic doing penitence, and not obedient, or kind-hearted"¹³⁵. "Asceticism", he writes on another occasion, "is often very harmful, for the devil will frequently use it as a tool, telling the person in question that it is a very helpful method for the religious student, and yet all this watching, praying, and fasting will often cause mental diseases, anger, or pride. Man is prone to think that he can do good on his own initiative, thus taking too much pride in his own work, which if really good, is not his work, but that of God. Hence there are many people

who pray much and inflict physical hardships upon themselves, while within they are unrighteous and avaricious"¹³⁶.

Groote himself did not lead a gloomy life, for he felt he had lived in that peace which passeth all understanding, and all temporal delights. The happiness enjoyed by him when conscious of this blessed peace was plainly visible upon his features¹³⁷. The reading of the Scriptures gave him great joy¹³⁸. When his friend Cele was depressed and worried about his shortcomings and his weakness amidst the many temptations he had to encounter, Groote wrote him an encouraging letter: "Be happy in the Lord, for nothing is so helpful in temptation as mental happiness and confidence in God"¹³⁹. "It is our duty", he says, "to make ourselves worthy habitations, where Christ will be pleased to dwell"¹⁴⁰. The Holy Ghost will readily assist us in acquiring virtue, for virtues are indeed gifts of the Holy Ghost. Far above the sacraments, above miracles and prophecies stand virtue and love¹⁴¹. All virtues are to be employed as tools wherewith we can increase love; through love they unite us with God the Father, and the Holy Ghost. Just as many twigs sprout from one common root, so are many virtues shaped by one force—namely, love¹⁴². Our enemy Satan knows very well that all external works and all spiritual exercises without love and faith are valueless. He persuades many to perform good works, telling them that thereby they will obtain salvation. Thus by devoting all their attention to these 'good works', they neglect their inner selves, where salvation and the kingdom of heaven may be found"¹⁴³.

The greatest of all virtues was humility. "The more we realize our own imperfections", says Groote, "the nearer we approach perfection"¹⁴⁴. "Before all things",

he continues, "and in all things study specially to become humble inwardly. For it is far better to do but little good out of obedience to God's will than to do a great deal more on one's own account, since the lesser becomes the greater before God¹⁴⁵. 'Good will' means to acquiesce in God's will, for everything that occurs is an act of God's will. God speaks to us through his acts. Blessed is he who obeys God's voice and bears in mind that everything which befalls him is predestined by God, even the wrongs done by others. False accusations and slander he ought to bear in peace, for God knows best¹⁴⁶. Let him say to his Creator: 'Lord, all that is mine and my own self I surrender to thee; I renounce my will for thy sake. This is the greatest thing I have been able to do in this world' "¹⁴⁷.

IV

Groote also was deeply interested in education. He never became a teacher himself, nor did he expect much of mere formal study as an aim in itself. Such subjects as geometry, arithmetic, rhetoric, logic, grammar, poetry, and astronomy, he thought, were of very little use to him. "Whatsoever doth not make thee a better Christian", he once said, "is harmful". He asserted that for him it was really a waste of time to get a degree in medicine, for such a degree would bring no practical results. The same was true of a degree in civil and canon law¹⁴⁸. Yet he was by no means opposed to learning, as his writings plainly show.

Groote loved books. He never had enough of them, and eagerly acquired each new addition to his library. Sometimes five copyists were kept busy writing manuscripts for him¹⁴⁹. His friends bought books or lent them to him¹⁵⁰. So much he thought of his library that he

arranged for a committee of three men to be in charge of his books after his death. These three men are called "guardians of Groote's books" in the documents of that time¹⁵¹. Groote not only read books whenever he had a chance, he simply devoured them, says one of his biographers¹⁵². There were times when he would wonder whether it really was right for him to love those books so passionately, but when he reproached himself for this "thirst of his after mere book-learning"¹⁵³, he very soon would dismiss his misgivings.

He devoted himself to encourage learning in school boys, often inviting them to his house, where he had them copy books for him and talked with them about their work at school, their aims and ideals. As they opened their hearts to him, he formed plans to help the boys who had no home and practically no friends at Deventer. If they needed good food and clothing he provided it, and he arranged for them to lodge with kind matrons who treated them as their own children¹⁵⁴. Furthermore, he reasoned that the boys needed capable teachers, men of sound learning, and of character, men who would try to win their love, and refrain from any kind of punishment until their friendly admonition had failed utterly¹⁵⁵. They should be university men, if possible. Hence we find Groote busy at work in the Yssel valley, trying to secure comfortable quarters for the homeless, and capable teachers for all. At Deventer, Zwolle, and Kampen he cultivated the friendship of both teachers and their employers¹⁵⁶. The most intimate friend he seems ever to have had was John Cele, the teacher at Zwolle from 1374 or 1375 to 1417. "These two men were one heart and one soul", says Thomas à Kempis¹⁵⁷. Partly through Groote's influence Cele obtained his position as rector of the city school at

Zwolle. At first he had not been inclined to teach, but Groote showed him the crying need of education for all classes of men and women, particularly for the clergy¹⁵⁸. "How are these men to instruct the masses", he would often remark, "if they have no knowledge to give, their brains being empty and void of all sound learning"¹⁵⁹? Cele's business was to teach. When after some time he decided to enter a monastery, where life would be much easier for him, Groote did not rest till he had persuaded him to continue teaching¹⁶⁰. He urged him to go to Prague, to study at the university, while at the same time he found a substitute for him at Zwolle¹⁶¹. The reforms introduced into the schools of Zwolle and Deventer were therefore the direct outcome of Groote's educational activities. Their history will be treated further in the following chapter.

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We have followed Groote's activities as student, scholar, reformer, and educator. His career as the accomplished son of a wealthy magistrate, his experiences as a holder of two prebends, the conversion which came to him in 1374, these and other factors we have endeavored to place in their proper light. He made a great impression on the men and women of his time, as the following eulogies show.

William de Sarvarvilla, cantor of the University of Paris, wrote in a letter addressed to Pope Urban VI, which induced the latter to grant Groote a license to preach, shortly before he died: "Truly he was 'The Great', for in his knowledge of all the liberal sciences, both natural and moral, of civil law, canon law, and

of theology, he was second to no one in the world, and all these branches of learning were united in him. He was a man of such saintliness and gave so good an example of the mortification of the flesh, his contempt for the world, his brotherly love for all, his zeal for the salvation of souls, his effectual preaching, his reprobation and hatred of wickedness, his withstanding of heretics, his enforcement of the canon law against those that broke the vow of chastity, his conversion to the spiritual life of divers men and women who had formerly lived according to the world, and his loyalty to our Lord Urban VI, — in all those things I say he gave so good an example, that many thousands of men testify to the belief that is in them that he was not less great in these virtues than he was in the aforesaid sciences”¹⁶². William Vornken, prior of Windesheim, calls Groote the “Fountain of the Devotio Moderna”, and adds: “The fathers of the former congregation say, Through what act of grace or miracle came it to pass that as master Gerard Groote was preaching and sowing the seed everywhere, there were added to him so suddenly and unexpectedly men of such kind and so great, for these were of one mind with him, and every one of them in each city and place burned with the zeal with which he also burned to exhort and convert a people that was stiff-necked. O happy day on which that great Gerard was born amongst us, for he was the fount and source whence flowed the waters of salvation to our land, so that what before his time had been parched became a pool, and the thirsty land, springs of water”¹⁶³. Thomas à Kempis claims that Groote “illuminated the whole country with his life, words, ways, and doctrine”¹⁶⁴.

In 1424 John Vos of Heudsen, prior of Windesheim, and leader of the “New Devotion”, said on his death-bed

to the monks of his monastery and the Brethren of the Common Life from Deventer, Zwolle, and Hulsbergen (near Hattem, also in the Yssel country): "Groote was the first father of this our reformation, the source and origin of the New Devotion; he was an apostle in this country who kindled fires of religious fervor in the cold hearts of men, and drew them to God"¹⁶⁵. John Busch, who had been sent from the Yssel valley to Erfurt, Magdeburg, Hildesheim, and other cities of central Germany, where he helped to reform many a monastery, also called Groote the fountain-head of the "Devotio Moderna", or "New Devotion"¹⁶⁶. This same opinion was expressed by Ruysbroeck's biographer at Groenendaal¹⁶⁷. Then we have the series of biographies written in Dutch, which describe the lives of Groote and his followers at Deventer. In the chapter devoted to Groote it is set down: "All religious fervor in this country for one hundred miles around was caused by master Gerard"¹⁶⁸. And when the news of Groote's death reached the convent of Weesp near Amsterdam, a devout sister wrote the following notice in her manuscript: "Gerard Groote, with his holy life and example, has enlightened the whole bishopric of Utrecht"¹⁶⁹.

It is obvious that the men and women of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries who were of the "New Devotion", or Christian Renaissance, considered Gerard Groote their spiritual father. He was in fact the founder of the Brotherhood of the Common Life and the Windesheim Congregation, which instituted the only lasting reforms of the whole fifteenth century, corrected the Vulgate, translated parts of the Bible, sent thousands upon thousands of religious books throughout Western Europe, reformed schools and text-books, comforted the sick, consoled the afflicted, fed the poor,

lodged the homeless, and composed that well-nigh perfect fruit of Christian mysticism: "*De Imitatione Christi*", or "*Imitation of Christ*".

To conclude, Gerard Groote, as founder of the Christian Renaissance, became the spiritual father of all the men educated by the Brethren of the Common Life and by their pupils, such as Thomas à Kempis, Gansfort, Erasmus, Dringenberg, Hegius, Murmellius, Agricola, Beatus Rhenanus, Wimpfeling, Luther, Zwingli, Bucer, Calvin, and Loyola, as we shall see in the following chapters.

CHAPTER II

THE RISE OF THE CHRISTIAN RENAISSANCE

Among Groote's followers at Deventer and elsewhere three groups or classes may be distinguished. They all had decided to change their lives, but many among them preferred to remain at home, where they could live just as religious a life, they said, as in a monastery or as members of a definitely organized society or brotherhood. To this class belonged the pious women who lodged so many poor school boys at Deventer, Zwolle, and several other places. But soon we lose sight of these unorganized little bands. Many of them became affiliated later with the Brethren and Sisters of the Common Life, who constituted the second class of Groote's disciples; or they joined the third class, namely the Augustinian Canons and Canonesses Regular of the Windesheim Congregation. It is to the last two groups, accordingly, that the following pages are devoted.

I

On the 21st of September, 1374, Groote ceded the use of his house to some poor women¹. Five years later he drew up a constitution for the little society², in which he clearly set forth the reason why he had asked these women to live in his house. Not to found a new monastic order, he wrote, had they come to live here, or a beguinage, but simply to find a place where they might worship God in peace. Only those could secure admittance who were not bound by monastic vows; nor were they expect-

ed to take such vows on entering the house. They should all be free to leave if they chose, though they could not re-enter, after once having taken their departure. All the inmates of the house would remain members of the local parish church, just as all other laymen. Their clothes should in no respect be different from those of the other women in the city, for they were neither nuns nor beguines. One might even be a member of the society without living in the "Meester-Geertshuis", or Master Gerard's house, at all. At first they had one matron, later two³. The matrons were to act as treasurers of the house, and would have authority to make all the members perform manual labor. Their orders were expected to be promptly obeyed. In case of ill-behavior the matrons would consult with two other sisters as to the form of punishment for breach of discipline. The offender would in most cases lose her share in the common savings. But if more serious offences were committed, such as theft, stubbornness, or too great a familiarity with men, the guilty person would have to be expelled⁴. After Groote's death the city council of Deventer would be asked to deal with such cases⁵. During the first few years, when the new society counted but a limited number of members, the two matrons took care of all the business transactions, such as buying supplies, matters of discipline, and supervision of the sisters' daily tasks. Later a division of labor was created. A provisor was chosen, and in 1383 Groote appointed John van den Gronde as the first rector. A procurator was appointed in 1435 and the various tasks of the sisters were also supervised after Groote's death by members specifically directed by the superiors⁶.

The constitution of the "House of Master Gerard" further stated that the members were to live soberly,

wear simple clothes, avoid familiar intercourse with men, and restrict their visits to a limit of eight days and a distance of not more than ten miles. No one would be expected to cede her property, on entering the house; the sisters would all work in common and share the expenses together, while the income would be equally divided. Every member of the house who was able to work would be expected to contribute her share of manual labor⁷, for Groote did not want the sisters to beg under any circumstances⁸. Each member, however, was to perform those tasks for which she was specially fitted by nature. Soon the sisters became great adepts in agricultural pursuits; they had a flourishing dairy business, and many of them earned neat little sums through their skill in sewing, knitting, weaving, spinning, and similar purely feminine employments⁹.

In composing this constitution for the Sisters of the Common Life, Groote prepared the way for a mightier organization, known later as the Brethren of the Common Life. Shortly after he left the Carthusian monastery of Monnikhuizen near Arnhem, he had succeeded in recruiting a number of devout followers. In 1380 a man joined them who was destined to become the leader of the "New Devotion". This man was called Florentius Radewijns. Born at Leerdam¹⁰ in the year 1350¹¹, he had gone to Prague in 1374¹², and received a master's degree in 1378¹³. Thereupon he had gone home to Gorinchem¹⁴, where he lived with his parents till the news of Groote's fame as preacher reached him¹⁵. This must have happened in the year 1380, for Groote had not yet left the Yssel valley¹⁶. So much impressed was he by Groote's imposing personality that he decided to imitate him in all things¹⁷. One of the first things he did was to give up his prebend at Utrecht, in order to

be nearer to Groote. At Deventer he became vicar of the altar of St. Paul in St. Lebwin's Church¹⁸.

It was in Radewijns' vicarage that Groote's twelve disciples used to meet, though not all of them actually lived in this house¹⁹. When did these disciples begin to live the common life? One writer thinks in 1372²⁰; that is, two years before Groote's conversion. Another one sets down a later date: 1381 or 1382²¹. Still another one places the date several years after Groote's death²²; while the latest "authority" on the Brethren of the Common Life claims that the brothers did not even have a rector until thirty or forty years after the organization was firmly established²³.

The sources, however, show plainly that Groote, shortly after his return from the monastery of Monnikhuizen near Arnhem, began to preach in the cities along the Yssel. Among his numerous followers there were twelve who clung quite faithfully to the master, except one of them, called a backslider, and traitor²⁴. Groote advised some of them to live together in one house, where they could exhort each other, work and pray together — in short, serve God with greater chance of success²⁵. We also read that Groote had several boys and young men copy books for him. The boys were often invited to his house. He purposely paid them a little each time so that they would have to come quite often and have a talk with him. It was not these boys whom Groote urged to live together in one house. And not only Groote invited school boys to his house, but also some of his followers at Zwolle and Deventer, most of whom were soon to become known as Brethren of the Common Life. Hence the founders of the new organization were not those school boys who were asked to Groote's house from time to time. The fact is, there

were also girls among the young people entertained by Groote's friends²⁶. Moreover, the sources do not at all tell us that these boys and girls who were given financial or other assistance by Groote and his followers founded the congregation or brotherhood, called Brethren of the Common Life²⁷. It is only some modern critics who make that assertion, and wrongly so.

Among the twelve disciples at Deventer there were several copyists, who made their living by copying books, and some of them, we saw, were living in Radewijns' vicarage. Now these copyists wanted to join their funds. Accordingly, Radewijns came to Groote one day and said to him: "Master, what harm should there be in our uniting our weekly earnings, and living the common life"? "Unite your funds"? Groote exclaimed in surprise. "Impossible, for the mendicant monks would surely attack us for trying to found a new monastic order"²⁸. But as Radewijns would not give up his plan so readily, Groote finally answered that in case they would in the near future lead the common life, he would gladly be their leader and instructor²⁹.

Should one call Florentius Radewijns then the founder of the Brethren of the Common Life? For did not he suggest to Groote the idea of uniting the funds? It should be remembered, however, that Groote had composed the constitution for the Sisters of the Common Life before Radewijns had ever heard of him. And it was Groote himself who had stipulated that the sisters should combine their wages and share the common expenses. For this reason the mendicants had already attacked him.

He had even found it necessary to defend them in a sermon at Deventer, together with the beguines, who also united their earnings³⁰. When the men in Rade-

wijns' house wanted to lead a life similar to that of the Sisters of the Common Life, he naturally hesitated, and pointed out to them the great danger of attack from his enemies, the mendicant monks, who were living a life of indolence and hated Groote for his love of poverty and manual labor. But his hesitation did not last long, for he knew well that the Canon Law would protect them. He mapped out their future mode of life, drew up a schedule for their daily tasks and their religious exercises³¹, and would undoubtedly have made further arrangements, if the hand of death had not suddenly intervened, as it did on the twentieth of August, 1384. Groote was indeed the founder of the new brotherhood, though his plans were only materialized after his death³².

II

On the afternoon of the twentieth of August, 1384, a pathetic scene was enacted at Deventer. In one of the houses on the Bagynestraat a group of men were standing around Groote's bed. Their beloved master was dying. They saw his life ebbing fast and trembled. And he himself was conscious of their dismay. There was a long silence. But at last he opened his eyes and spoke: "My friends", he said, "do not fear, and let not your hearts be troubled. You will not have to give up your present mode of life. In order that you may protect your temporal possessions I advise you to build a monastery, where those among you best fit for the monastic life may find shelter and perform their work in peace, while at the same time it will protect the others who prefer to remain in the world". "But which order shall we join"? they asked. "The Augustinian", he

answered, "for their rules are not so harsh as those of the Carthusians and Cistercians"³³.

Groote also gave a last message to the Sisters of the Common Life. He had regretted the fact that only middle-aged women were willing to join the little society. But better times would come, he thought. "When I shall have departed hence", was his final remark, "I shall send some little flowers from above, benignant spirits, which will swell your numbers"³⁴.

Thus we are told by John Busch and Thomas à Kempis, the two most reliable historians of the Windesheim circle. Their narratives do in no respect contradict each other, as some writers have thought, who failed to read Thomas à Kempis very carefully³⁵. On the contrary, they are supported by other trustworthy sources. It was not John Busch, for seven years the pupil and assistant of John Cele at Zwolle, who indulged in flights of the imagination, but those modern scholars who insist on overthrowing the best sources we have. Groote, it appears, had openly attacked Bartholomew of Dordrecht, a mendicant monk, and the clergy at Utrecht besides. They were furious. Moreover, Groote, as founder of the Sisters of the Common Life, had instituted a semi-monastic organization which was looked upon by the mendicant monks as a hostile rival of their order. He was also translating parts of the Bible into the vernacular, preached against indolence, abhorred all forms of begging, and bitterly denounced those monks and priests who failed to perform their duty. Last but not least, he had a group of disciples who were holding regular meetings in the vicarage of Radewijns. One half of these disciples were actually living with the vicar. They copied books for Groote and for others, and were surely going to live the common life. Perhaps they had already given

up their private property. At any rate, they were founding a monastic order, it seemed, without taking the customary vows, or asking the pope for his sanction.

Whenever these copyists were seen on the streets, they were addressed as Beghards and Lollards, hooted at, and commended to burn in hell, or some other suitable place of torture. The common people, and those among the lower classes who frequented inns or lounged about the streets all day, were instigated by some monks to slander Groote's disciples. These monks composed songs in which Groote was mocked and ridiculed³⁶. Then there were many laymen as well as clergymen who had attended Groote's sermons, and had felt some compunction about their evil ways, but finally had decided to ignore Groote's appeals. They gradually moved away farther and farther from the path so persistently pointed out to them by Groote. Finally the clergy resented his attacks. For it seemed to them as if he had singled them out for reproof. Groote had advised them to give a large share of their possessions to the poor, to visit the sick and afflicted, to take care of the homeless, and to shun all forms of indolence, intemperance, and immorality. The man was insane, they said to each other. And look at those copyists: always writing books on religion, and never ready to visit us in the tavern and the dance-hall. Do you think we would lead such miserable lives as those wretched copyists are doing? Thus they argued, glad to find support among other members of the clergy, both secular and regular.

Groote was aware of these things. He had already told Radewijns to act with caution. As the people grew bolder each day, and the mendicants increased their attacks, the situation began to look serious. The brethren, not being protected by monastic vows, were uneasy and

held daily consultations in Radewijns' vicarage. Finally they came to the conclusion that a monastery should be built where a part of them could live and by their example lead and protect the others. They were to join the Augustinian Canons Regular³⁷.

But Groote's end was near, as we have seen. Though he must be considered the founder both of the Brethren of the Common Life and the Windesheim Congregation, he left his work unfinished. Would he also leave his disciples without a leader? Great was their affliction in having to lose so kind and so learned a master. But as he looked up for the last time at his faithful followers, now only eleven in number, his eyes rested upon the one he loved best. "I will not leave you defenseless", he said, "I appoint Florentius as your new leader. He will instruct you, and help you, as I have tried to do". And then he departed.

III

So highly in fact did Groote respect his faithful friend that he had urged him to become a priest³⁸. As for himself, we know, he thought he was too great a sinner to join the ranks of the priesthood. But Radewijns was endowed with special gifts of devotion. No one was kinder than he to the poor, the sick, and the afflicted. He often went to visit the suffering. Many a meal he was wont to send to certain famishing families in the slums of Deventer. A list was kept by him of all the sick people in the city³⁹. The feeble-bodied and all others who through no fault of their own were in need of material assistance, he supplied with food and clothing, and the poorer class of school boys with pens, ink, and paper. One lenten season there was great scarcity of food and of work, so that an unusually large number of poor

people came to Radewijns for help; whereupon he, finding himself unable to give assistance to so many at once, persuaded his friends and followers to add one hour a day to their work for the period of one week. The extra money thus saved he handed over to the "Overseer of the Poor" at Deventer. During the month of May he was accustomed to gather herbs for the sick. He would invite all those people to his house who were afflicted with ulcers, sores, and other skin diseases. They were then given a bath in warm water, perfumed with aromatic herbs. A clean bed was also prepared for each patient, where they were told to rest themselves, after first having received a cup of wine⁴⁰.

Radewijns did not even shrink from lepers, and to the maimed and deformed he was particularly kind. "I once knew a leper", says Thomas à Kempis, "who used to abide outside the walls of the city. Florentius would often sit beside him and talk to him". "I have seen", he continues, "one blind of an eye, and one lame of one foot, who were both converted by him". At times he was consulted by so many people that he had no time even to go to church⁴¹. And who was there who could comfort the people as did Radewijns? Involuntarily their hearts were filled with new hope and happiness at one touch of his hand, or a single glance from those starry eyes which bespoke tender sympathy. The moment one approached him, one's troubles and anxieties would suddenly subside. What was there in this singularly attractive person to shed about him as it were a halo of almost celestial felicity? Was he so great an orator? Did he perhaps cast the hypnotic spell of fiery eloquence upon the fascinated crowds?

Among all the men Thomas à Kempis had met before he wrote the "Imitation", Radewijns, he thought, was

the one who had taught him most about the Cross of Christ. We should learn of him, Christ had said, by imitating him⁴². And how could we imitate him best? By taking his yoke upon us, the yoke of humility, and charity. One should try to sympathize with the poor and afflicted, visit the sick, comfort orphans and widows, and be ready to perform the most humble tasks at home⁴³. We should never seek our own good, Radewijns used to say, but rather consider only our neighbor's welfare. Thus one might become a Christian, in his opinion. And Radewijns was wont to practise what he preached. He was always ready to take an active share in his neighbor's sorrows. Naturally, his feeling of pity was instinctively felt by all who came near him⁴⁴. Thomas à Kempis himself had often experienced a thrill of rapture simply in being near his teacher and master. A few words from Radewijns' lips would comfort all. "This", says Thomas à Kempis, "I have often tried and experienced myself"⁴⁵. Is it any wonder that Thomas à Kempis, who had spent several years in Radewijns' presence, often used to look upon his stay at Deventer with a feeling of reverence and intense gratitude? Florentius Radewijns was a man who lived the ideals of the "Imitation of Christ". Whether he formulated those ideals we shall consider later.

But Radewijns was also a famous preacher. From far and near the people used to come to his house, where he or one of his followers addressed them in their own language⁴⁶. These sermons were held in the open air, and particularly on holidays the crowds that assembled in the garden of the vicarage were quite large. Gradually it became a custom among the people to write down parts of Radewijns' discourses, for they were so easy to understand and so practical⁴⁷. He spoke to them in

their own dialect, unadorned with pompous foreign quotations. Had not Christ done the same in his day? Had he preached in a foreign language? Why should Radewijns then employ Latin or fine speeches in reminding the people of Christ's message to his followers? Plain speech, simple words he used. And these were kept alive in the shops, the mills, and the farm-houses.

Though fully aware of his duties as a member of society, Radewijns loved the contemplative life. "I often used to look at him in the choir", says Thomas à Kempis, "and whenever I saw him, I was careful not to chatter, so impressed I was by his great religious fervor. When he was walking on the street, he seldom would notice the greetings of his friends, being engrossed in meditation. Scarcely five or six words would he speak at our supper-table. But when he was alone, then his mind became illuminated with so pure a light of divine radiance that whether he was reading the Old Testament or the New Testament, always some mystic interpretation of every passage came to him"⁴⁸.

As a faithful follower of Christ, Radewijns loved the simple life, wearing plain garments even after he had been ordained priest, avoiding dainty food, and reading only such books as might aid him in improving his character. His followers he exhorted to do the same. Novices and other inexperienced people should avoid the study of subtle questions, he used to say⁴⁹. But in one respect he failed to grasp the true meaning of Christ's teachings. "He did not consider with due care the weakness of his body", Thomas à Kempis wisely remarks⁵⁰. As a result of his excessive fasting, he ruined his digestive organs, losing all taste for different foods, mistaking wine for oil or beer⁵¹. Often his friend Everard Eza of Almelo, one of Gerard Groote's most influential

disciples, would warn him of his folly, and cure him for the time being⁵². Fortunately Everard induced him to take more rest and to work more often in the open air⁵³. He had to admit, however, that if it had not been for Radewijns' prayers and the grace of God, he must have died long before his time⁵⁴.

In spite of his weak body Radewijns had an imposing personality. His presence in the choir was sufficient to banish all jesting⁵⁵. Thomas à Kempis himself did not stir when he was near. Says Thomas: "Even though he were not looking at me, yet I did not dare to talk in the choir, so I feared and respected his presence. Once he came up to me, to sing with me out of my book. I stood as if rooted to the ground and did not dare to move"⁵⁶. There were people who fearlessly insulted Groote's disciples after his death, but not those living in Radewijns' house; and although a few condemned the habits of Brethren of the Common Life at Deventer, they nevertheless all agreed in praising Radewijns⁵⁷.

His knowledge of human nature was remarkable. Each one of his followers he treated in such manner as to stimulate his heart and mind. When reproach was needed he would freely employ it, but if one could be won through gentleness, praise, or jest, he was glad to employ those means also⁵⁸. He was not weak in his kindness, or proud in his coolness. Great talents he had none, nor was there any particular virtue or vice observable in his character. The man's whole personality had undergone a harmonious development. Thoughtful and prudent, painstaking, calm, persevering, free from violent passions, and devoid of special talents, he was always composed, a perfect master of his lower self, harsh to his own nature, but filled with love and sympathy for his neighbor. Such was the man appointed by Groote

as the leader of the "New Devotion", according to his biographers.

The works he wrote himself enable us to give a few more particulars. Radewijns was neither a scholar nor a great author in our sense of the word. Many paragraphs in his writings appear to have been copied from the Fathers and the works of medieval mystics. One of his writings, called "Omnes inquit artes", is merely a collection of excerpts; and the only real composition from his hand, known as the "Tractatulus de Spiritualibus Excercitiis", or "Treatise on Spiritual Exercises", contains many a sentence copied verbally from Bonaventura, Cassianus, and other writers. But they do show us what sort of a thinker Radewijns was; they reflect his theological and philosophical views.

Our aim and final destination, Radewijns writes, is the kingdom of God. The road which leads to that goal is purity of heart⁵⁹. All our labors, our watching, fasting, meditation, prayer, and reading of the Scriptures are only means employed by us to eradicate vice, ere we ascend toward the plane of perfect love⁶⁰. And as we advance on our road we shall be able to resuscitate the slumbering memories of the spirit — memories of a glorious past and of a still more glorious future. In keeping steadily before our eyes the destination at the end of our road, we shall continue to exercise our spiritual nature, lest our first ardor should cool. These spiritual exercises will finally enable our weary souls to enter the harbors of rest and peace, after a long voyage across the seas of time⁶¹. We, as pilgrims, wandering aimlessly in the desert of time, should seek the joys of heaven upon earth⁶², which can be done most effectively by checking the desires of our mortal bodies, for the way of the spirit is life, and the way of the flesh is death⁶³.

As the pilgrim advances upon the high-way of this mortal life, faint memories come to him of a lost heritage. Sometimes, when he pauses on his way to look about him, he catches feeble glimpses of his happy past before the fall of man. At such moments it is the voice of the spirit which urges him to turn his steps homeward once more, by purifying his heart from the stains made by sin. For the purer his heart, the clearer his memory will become; he will then regain that marvelous secret of immortal life: love. The two chief ends of all religious or spiritual exercises, therefore, are the purging of our heart from sin, and the cultivation of love⁶⁴. Perfect love is never acquired by any one, except he first has cleansed his heart from vice and supplanted evil by virtue⁶⁵. Consequently the more successful we are in purging our hearts, the greater our love will become⁶⁶. Our final aim, therefore, is love; everything else is but a means to reach that end⁶⁷. Through the Fall our mind or reason has become blind to the truth, our will perverted, our memories unstable⁶⁸. Man is a depraved being, but through Christ's sacrifice he is not hopelessly lost, nay he may gain a better fate than those spirits which are not allowed to enter mortal bodies⁶⁹. But he must act, although his soul has already been saved through faith. For Christ's sacrifice, supplemented by our personal faith, does not purify our heart nor reform our mind.

All virtue, says Radewijns, is contained in love⁷⁰. He compares man with a musical instrument; man in his present state is out of tune with the Infinite⁷¹. When one is converted, one's improper and imperfect affections or emotions are changed into pure love; one will then love God for God's own sake⁷². All our reading, meditations, and prayers should be concentrated chiefly upon

the abolition of sin, thus making room for love⁷³. Love, we must remember, is worth more than the negative attitude of fighting vice; it is the end, the crown of human existence. Nothing but love can lead us to the heavenly country⁷⁴. Love for God in the first place, then love for our neighbor. We must strive to promote mutual friendships, practise modesty, suppress hatred, jealousy, and spite, and be careful in admonishing others. Obedience is the greatest virtue: it perfects our humility. It is in fact very sinful to seek one's own welfare rather than that of one's neighbor⁷⁵.

Radewijns urges his readers to exercise themselves in the acquisition of brotherly love⁷⁶, to read the Bible, to pray often, to confess their sins, to perform their daily tasks with alacrity, and to cultivate a healthful discipline of mind and morals⁷⁷. Manual labor should be performed by all⁷⁸, but not all forms of manual labor were fitted in his opinion to favor the practice of spiritual exercises; those which resembled the spiritual exercises in kind were preferable, such as copying religious writings⁷⁹. No one should study to acquire knowledge for its own sake, for there is no true learning except that which teaches us to acquire love through the conquest of evil⁸⁰. The whole Bible was written for one end only; if one succeeds, and remains steadfast, one will not need to read the Bible any longer⁸¹. There surely can be no use in studying difficult passages in the Bible, according to Radewijns⁸². He thought no human brain could grasp the meaning of those passages, unless one were aided by the Spirit.

Somewhere within our inner selves a mysterious force resides, called conscience. It should be our daily care to stimulate this force into action. Usually it suffers from neglect, grows feebler and feebler till its voice is

but faintly distinguished. Know thyself, Socrates had said, and Radewijns repeated this message. Examine your inner nature, he wrote, and arouse your conscience from its long slumber⁸³. Pray, watch, and work, lest the force of habit overwhelm you. One should meditate frequently on the ultimate approach of death⁸⁴, the sufferings of Christ, and the final judgment⁸⁵. He also gives directions for fighting various vices, which he copied largely from the works of Cassianus⁸⁶. We should also seek the blessings of solitude and silence, for when human voices are absent, God will come to talk with us. Especially should we seek a few moments of this conversation with God shortly before retiring at night⁸⁷.

Virtue, says Radewijns, can only be acquired through grace. We of our own selves can never overcome evil, so low have we fallen. Even our good works are not wholly good, but mixed with imperfections of various kinds⁸⁸. If we humiliate ourselves, however, as Christ once did, this grace will come to us in abundant measure. And how can we best cultivate this virtue of humility? By frankly admitting how depraved we have become since the fall of man, how prone to evil, how powerless in fighting vice; by patiently bearing with accusations, insults, and calumnies heaped upon us by slanderous tongues, and by giving all the credit to God, if perchance we should succeed in overcoming vice⁸⁹. Thus we shall find love, the greatest of all blessings⁹⁰. Love will bring peace, and much inward joy, though not unalloyed with grief about our continued shortcomings⁹¹. When once this love has come to us, we shall seek to draw more souls to Christ, which we can do most successfully on holy days, when people have more leisure and are in a better position to listen to our appeals⁹².

After the purgative way comes the illuminative way. Man will then begin to understand God's tenderness to him⁹³, and will fathom the mystery of the fall of man and of his redemption through Christ. Christ's sacrifice on the cross is in fact the greatest event in the history of the human race⁹⁴. No one can realize this more perfectly than he who has felt the load of sin gradually being lifted from his weary back and shoulders. With tears of joy he will look upon that central cross at Golgotha, where all at once the whole guilt of humanity was paid for, where the redemption of all souls was bought at a terrific price. Christ our savior and example, the chief factor in every man's life, should therefore have the chief and best place in every man's life⁹⁵. Thus wrote he who for sixteen years was the leader of the "New Devotion", or Christian Renaissance.

IV

In the year of Groote's death the religious revival inaugurated by him had gained a foot-hold in those places where he himself had preached, or where his followers had begun to continue his work, namely at Deventer, Zwolle, Doesburg, Zutphen, Kampen, Almelo, Utrecht, Amsterdam, Haarlem, Leiden, etc. But among all these cities and villages only those situated nearest to the Yssel valley succeeded in retaining the master's best thoughts. Naturally it was Deventer and Zwolle which at once assumed a leading position in the history of the "New Devotion", and kept the fires of religious zeal burning, when all the others gradually lost their first ardor.

During Groote's life-time the question of the common life had been brought up for discussion. Groote had assured his followers that he would gladly become their

leader and protector, in case they should decide to follow the mode of life practised by the women in his own house at Deventer. Some of them were to build a monastery, he had said, while the others would remain at Deventer. The monastery was not built at once, however. Two years elapsed before the brethren felt the need of seeking protection there. For they had not yet begun to lead the common life, wherefore the mendicant monks left them comparatively at ease, seeing that their society did not resemble a monastic organization. The brethren used to meet in a very informal way. Some of them were living with Radewijns in the vicarage, but not a few merely came to visit at stated times. Not long after Groote's death an important event took place. Radewijns had been accustomed to keep charge of the money earned by the men living in his house. When he noticed their indifference to merely temporal advantages, such as wealth, fame, and honor, he decided to unite their wages, and make of them one common fund⁹⁶. From that day they were Brethren of the Common Life. The exact date of this is not clear; it naturally must have happened between Groote's death and the foundation of the new monastery. For they built that monastery because they had offended their rivals, the mendicant monks, by founding a semi-monastic organization, having united their funds and shared their expenses in common. It had now become a vital necessity for them to build the monastery, where some could live and all would find protection⁹⁷. Since Groote died on August 20, 1384, and the monastery was founded in 1386, we may assume that the common life was begun before 1387, and probably during the fall of 1384 or the year 1385, inasmuch as Groote had drawn up definite rules in August or July, 1384.

There were at this time ten men living in the vicarage with Radewijns at Deventer⁹⁸. An important character was John of Huxaria or Höxter. The brethren were so impressed by this man's religious fervor that for a time they were uncertain whether they should elect him as their first rector or Radewijns, the acknowledged leader of the "New Devotion"; finally they chose Radewijns⁹⁹. According to the obituary of the Brethren of the Common Life at Deventer¹⁰⁰, John of Höxter died on the 7th of January, 1387¹⁰¹. Consequently the brethren must have chosen their choice before this date¹⁰².

The next event of importance took place in the year 1391, when the "House of Florentius" was founded, the first real house of the Brethren of the Common Life, and named after the first rector, Florentius Radewijns. Till 1391 the brethren had been living in the vicarage with Radewijns. As their number increased from year to year, they finally decided to move to more comfortable quarters. There was a devout lady, called Zwedera of Runen, the wife of a nobleman, who had heard of their plight. She offered them a house and lot, situated in the Pontsteeg, in exchange for two small buildings in the Enghe Straat. This house in the Pontsteeg was torn down and replaced by a fine new building, the "House of Florentius". Most of the brethren now moved from the vicarage to the "House of Florentius", taking their books and furniture with them¹⁰³.

Still another house was founded during the life of Radewijns: the "Nova Domus", "Domus Pauperum", or the new house for poor clerks. It was built in 1398¹⁰⁴, and intended for the poorer class of pupils attending the cathedral school¹⁰⁵. For the Brethren of the Common Life faithfully continued Groote's policy in helping poor boys and girls to get an education. Radewijns and his

followers often invited them to their house, providing them with material and spiritual sustenance¹⁰⁶. "Behold", Radewijns wrote in 1398, "we take these youths into our house, inexperienced as they are, changeable, having as yet no definite aims or exerting much will power, but they are tractable and pliable. Oh what would happen, if one, or two, or three of us would persuade these boys to work, and teach them discipline, and humility"¹⁰⁷? Many devout burghers at Deventer would take an interest in the younger boys, due to Radewijns' influence¹⁰⁸. One Lambert van Galen always had eight of them in his house¹⁰⁹, and a certain Bye van Dunen also took care of eight boys¹¹⁰. These boys were all consigned to the people by the brethren in the "House of Florentius"¹¹¹. For only after 1400 did the Brethren of the Common Life take in boys who had not yet finished their work at the cathedral school¹¹².

Upon the whole we may say that the brethren during the rectorate of Florentius Radewijns conscientiously tried to imitate the lives of the Apostles as set forth in the New Testament¹¹³. It was the simple life they led¹¹⁴, a life of work and devotional exercises¹¹⁵. Says Badius Ascensius, the celebrated humanist and printer, who had received his early education from the Brethren of the Common Life at Ghent:

"All were to approach as near as possible the life of the Apostles and of the primitive church of Christ, so that in the whole congregation there should be one heart, and that no one should consider or call anything his own. No one should seek outside the house the cure of souls, ecclesiastical benefices, or worldly occupations for the sake of gain; but clerics who should be found worthy would be promoted to cures that were

not too lucrative. All should dwell together in chastity and poverty, and should be clad in that manner of dress which Gerard Groote had approved. No one should beg from door to door; and in order that they might not be driven to this by want, all should avoid idleness, and according to their abilities should transcribe books, or instruct children. They were to take care that they themselves and all whom they should teach, should venerate and worship God with the deepest piety. They should love their neighbor with due charity, and should assist the poor with alms, according to their means. All should observe brotherly love. To their superior or spiritual Father in all lawful and just concerns they should yield unquestioning obedience, considering that their highest merit consisted in charity and submission. All earnings accruing from their labor in common or in private they should, according to the apostolic rule, lay at the feet of the Superior, and if perchance they left the Brotherhood, they should carry nothing with them"¹¹⁶.

When Thomas à Kempis lived in the house of Radewijns (1398-1399) there were about twenty inmates, three of whom were laymen¹¹⁷. And in a document of the year 1396 we read that there should be at least four priests and eight clerics, that is, twelve members belonging to the clergy; the number of laymen was not specified¹¹⁸. Gradually their number increased, for their fame soon spread, even into distant countries. Many priests, says one biographer, attracted by the rumor of Radewijns' virtues and those of his followers, came to Deventer and submitted themselves to Radewijns' rule, laying open to him their hearts. Particularly from Westphalia they came in great numbers¹¹⁹. It was not long

before the mendicant monks and their friends heard of the growing repute of the Brethren of the Common Life. Groote's fear had not been ill-founded. In spite of the new monastery they had built, the men at Deventer who now remained behind, were not sufficiently protected, having taken no monastic vows. One of their friends and protectors, named John ter Poorten, a prominent member of the city council, was publicly attacked as "Pope of the Lollards"¹²⁰.

Not satisfied with instigating the people and inventing sundry unofficial attacks, the Dominicans began to look for other ways of harming the brethren. They carefully studied the Canon Law and its commentaries, thereby hoping to prove that the Brethren of the Common Life had no right of existence. To live the common life without taking monastic vows was a crime, they said. No one had a right to found a new religious order without the pope's consent. And here were those upstarts at Deventer who had never asked for the pope's consent. They had a rector whom they had decided to obey, yet they took no vows of obedience. They earned their daily bread with their own hands, had definite rules and regulations, read sacred writings in the vernacular, and even held addresses to the people in their own language. All this they did without waiting for any one's permission. Surely, so strange and new-fangled an institution was an offense to the Church!

The attacks grew fiercer, as time went on, for the jealousy of the mendicant and other monks increased in correspondence with the rising power of the new brotherhood. The Augustinian Canons Regular of Windesheim heard of these attacks. In 1395 they drew up a document in which they defended their friends at Deventer. The Brethren of the Common Life were

virtuous men, they wrote. They taught no heresy of any kind, represented no secret societies or lodges, did not preach outside of the churches, had assumed no rules, no new monastic garments, had taken no new vows, and their whole mode of life had been approved by Gregory XI¹²¹.

This document was not sufficient, however, to stop the enemy's assaults. What was worse, in 1398 another enemy appeared in the form of a terrible pestilence. William of Vianen first caught the disease. Ten brothers were infected and died. They were nursed by John Ketel, their pious cook, but he also passed away in 1398¹²². Then the remaining brethren, led by Radewijns, decided to leave the city and go to Amersfoort across the Veluwe, leaving a few members behind to take care of their property at Deventer¹²³. At Amersfoort the brethren continued their work with new energy. They had taken several school boys with them, for whom they found suitable quarters among Groote's disciples at Amersfoort¹²⁴, where the first brethren-house west of the Yssel had been founded in 1395¹²⁵. Here the men from Deventer copied books, and preached to the people in the vernacular, especially on holidays¹²⁶, "instructing them by example and doctrine"¹²⁷. But it was not a happy time for them. They were now staying far away from the home they had built with their own hands and means. The attacks of their enemies continued, and the pestilence was sweeping one after another to the grave in Deventer. True, they were living with friends who were hospitable and kind, but still these friends were comparative strangers to them.

A spirit of sadness pervades the letters written by the fugitives at Amersfoort to the men at Deventer. "Let us go and die with them", says Gerard Zerbolt of Zut-

phen, one of the brethren who had gone to Amersfoort, "or else let them come and die with us, though we are able to die here and you to live there. What will life be worth to me, after they have passed away"¹²⁸? And when they were told that one of their beloved friends at home had followed the others to the grave in their absence, they were almost overwhelmed with grief¹²⁹. Their next three letters also breathe anguish. The brethren appeared to have lost all interest in life, so down-cast they were¹³⁰. But in their last letter the dawn of a new hope breaks. They are expecting to return to Deventer soon! "Just as the members of one body all suffer together and console each other", they now write, "so do they also exult in each other's good fortune. The expectation of our return home is a great source of joy to us. Florentius is going to Amsterdam soon and when he returns, we hope to go back home to you"¹³¹.

And what of their other enemies, the mendicant monks? Suddenly their attacks were rendered forceless by a scholar, who came to their aid at the right moment. This new defender of the brethren was Gerard Zerbolt of Zutphen, a man of considerable learning and sharp insight into all questions pertaining to law and tradition. A much greater scholar than Radewijns himself, he was more successful in affairs. With a sort of prophetic vision he perceived the dangers encircling the new brotherhood on all sides, when the brothers themselves were scarcely aware of impending trouble. They had written a great deal about the sorrows of separation, but the dangers from without they could not perceive.

The crisis came in 1398. Radewijns had been at Utrecht and at Amsterdam. The brethren at Deventer and Amersfoort were sure of his success in obtaining privileges from Frederick van Blankenheim, Bishop of

Utrecht. But Radewijns had to write home from Amersfoort: "The business of the Lord has made no progress; wherever we turn we meet with obstacles"¹³². That was all he could say. He now was home-sick. He had resolved to leave Amersfoort for Deventer in secret. His first attempt was a failure, but finally he succeeded in fleeing. Strange though it seems, Radewijns, the first rector of the Brethren of the Common Life, forsook his followers in the thick of the fight. He had been unequal to his task. How fortunate therefore that now his work could be continued by his more vigorous disciple. The name of this disciple we seldom read in the documents of that time, and the chronicles devote only a few pages to the story of his life. He loved to sit in his lonely cell, unknown to the world about him. But by uniting the best thoughts of Radewijns with the scholarly labors of Groote, he became the representative of both types of devotion or mysticism: the simple and the worldly-wise, the practical and the theoretical, the active and the passive.

V

Gerard Zerbolt was born at Zutphen in the year 1367¹³³. After attending school in his native city he went to a university, probably that of Prague, where he studied hard from early dawn till late at night. But he does not seem to have stayed there very long, for in 1384 we find him at Deventer. Radewijns persuaded him to become a member of the brotherhood at Deventer¹³⁴. A born student, he passed nearly all his time in his room at the "House of Florentius", reading "sacred writings", that is, the Bible, the Fathers, the Canon Law, and similar works¹³⁵. He used to be so occupied

with his work that he would forget the whole world about him, perfectly oblivious to any changes in the weather for example. Even at the dinner-table he was wont to continue his meditations. As soon as the meal was over, however, and the Bible was brought forward, he was all attention¹³⁶. This book-worm, the other brothers reasoned, should be appointed librarian of their house. And Zerbolt, once in possession of Groote's books, together with his learned discourses which might be manipulated as a key to the books themselves, soon became the foremost scholar among the Brethren of the Common Life. Thomas à Kempis was a member of the house at that time. Says Thomas: "Many clerics used to come to him for advice, asking him to solve difficult problems for them. Radewijns often called for him when business transactions had to be undertaken for the house, and particularly when questions of law came up for discussion. Whenever Zerbolt was confronted with problems too difficult for him to solve, he would write them down and keep them in mind till he would meet some learned doctor. The scholars and great writers praised him highly for his learning"¹³⁷. Thus Zerbolt gradually prepared himself for the struggle in which he was to bear the brunt. The struggle lasted from 1384-1419, but it was decided in favor of the brethren, when Zerbolt collected his arguments in their defense — which he used in soliciting the protection of important church officials — and arranged them in the shape of a treatise, called "On the Common Life"¹³⁸.

It was prohibited to found a new monastic order, Zerbolt admitted¹³⁹, but to live in private houses and share one's expenses with others was quite permissible, as it had been customary in the past; it had been recommended by the saints of old, and approved by the

pope¹⁴⁰. Those chapters in the Canon Law, Zerbolt continued, which were directed against the founders of new monastic orders, were in no way opposed to the common life as such¹⁴¹. What did the words "religious" and "religion" imply, he asked, and who might be said to be founding new monastic orders in contravention of the Canon Law? Surely, the way in which the Brethren of the Common Life conducted themselves was irreproachable¹⁴². There were six ways of possessing temporal goods, some of which were far from commendable¹⁴³, but to live outside of monasteries and still to have no property of one's own, was highly praiseworthy¹⁴⁴. In the first place, it would be in complete accordance with Christ's wish as found in the Gospel of St. Matthew, ch. XVIII [ch. XIX, verse 21]: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast"¹⁴⁵. Secondly, man's natural mind or reason impels him to live a simple life, that is, the common life, though man has sinned against his natural mind or reason¹⁴⁶, wherefore the common life appears more difficult now. Again, many saints and doctors recommend the cession of one's private property for the benefit of the whole society or family, such as Egidius, Thomas Aquinas, and Bede¹⁴⁷. Where love reigns supreme, no one will want to have possessions of his own, and friendship is promoted by the common life, as has so well been said by Seneca¹⁴⁸. Furthermore, in the primitive, the Apostolic Church, all goods had been in common, and was not the early church the best one¹⁴⁹? We are taught by nature to lead the common life, for man is indeed a social animal, as Aristotle justly remarked. Hence the Stoics used to say that man was born to assist other men, which saying is supported by Genesis II¹⁵⁰. This is what Plato also asserted in the myth of Timaeus¹⁵¹. Paul preached the

same doctrine in the twelfth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, and Ambrose in the first book of the "De Officiis", ch. CXXVIII, while there are several chapters found in the Canon Law which exhort all clerics to lead the common life¹⁵². Augustine also recommended the common life on several occasions¹⁵³.

But now it happens, says Zerbolt, that in our day we are told that the common life is only to be lived by monks, and that all the references in the "sacred writings" which approve the common life apply solely to the monastic state. For this reason one very rarely meets with men or women living the common life except in monasteries, though it was not that way in the days of the primitive church and long thereafter. For the same reason it may perhaps seem justifiable to all those monks who have lost all traces of religious fervor, and are filled with iniquity, gradually to do away with the common life altogether. Similarly many evangelical precepts are no longer obeyed, although they are most beneficial to all those who still follow them¹⁵⁴.

Here Zerbolt exposes the secret of the great decline in morals among the clergy, secular as well as regular. At first it was customary for all to follow Christ and obey every one of his commandments in so far as humanly possible. As the first ardor cooled, only the spiritual leaders were expected to do what in preceding centuries had been performed by all. And in Zerbolt's time many members of the clergy had relinquished all hopes and desires of becoming imitators of Christ and his apostles. Zerbolt knew quite well where they failed. Even when the most experienced members of his house at Deventer built a monastery which was generally regarded as a model of piety, Zerbolt remained in the "House of Florentius", as Radewijns, his teacher, did.

One could practise religion just as well in private homes, he thought, and for many years it was his highest ambition to prove this to the outside world.

Zerbolt had by no means exhausted his evidence in favor of the Brethren of the Common Life. Augustine advises us, he continues, in cases of doubt to refer to the older laws, writings, or customs of the Church. We should not hesitate to search among the works of the Ancients. What do we find regarding the theory of the common life? Not only was it practised by the apostolic church, but even long before the coming of Christ. The common life was begun in Paradise¹⁵⁵. And if man had not fallen, this mode of living would still be universal among men. After the state of innocence man was placed under the law of nature, or the natural laws. Even in this state the common life was continued among religious men, and it flourished where love and friendship were cultivated¹⁵⁶. Many philosophers, although they lived without the guidance of the Scriptures, were taught by the "Law of nature" and the "natural light" that the common life would promote friendship and love. Consequently they also lived the common life¹⁵⁷. Of the Pythagoreans we read that all the disciples of Pythagoras laid all their money in their midst, and among them was great friendship. For Pythagoras had taught them to make one out of many. That was true friendship, he said¹⁵⁸. On the question of the common life the philosophers of old almost completely agreed with the theologians, hence there was no need of giving other quotations from philosophical writings¹⁵⁹.

Again, the common life flourished under the régime of the Mosaic law, particularly among the wisest and most virtuous men. There were namely three sects among the Jews, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Ess-

enes, and of these three the Essenes were the noblest, for according to Josephus they lived in many respects the apostolic life and had all goods in common. This mode of life was reinstated therefore by Christ, observed by the Apostles and their disciples, and continued afterwards. But in the state of glory, when God will be all in all, and the joys of us all the joys of each, and the joys of each the joys of all, then this common life is to be perfected and universally applied. For where all things shall be in common, there will be no discord, but perfect love and unity. And the more sincerely we practise this common life and this love for God and our neighbor, the more rapidly we shall approach this state of glory¹⁶⁰.

In the last part of the third chapter Zerbolt shows that the dwelling together of pious men in private homes does not necessarily institute an officially recognized "collegium", for these men hold no offices in the Church, and if some of them do, it is certainly not on account of their office that they were admitted as members of their society¹⁶¹. The fourth chapter of the "Treatise on the Common Life" deals with the subject of secret societies. Three kinds of such societies are prohibited, Zerbolt writes, namely the assemblies of conspirators, of heretics, and of the seditious. But the Brethren of the Common Life are a quite different sort; they are pious, loyal, orderly¹⁶². The fifth chapter is devoted to the question of preaching in private houses. This is forbidden, Zerbolt admits, but the members of a group may address and exhort one another, correct each other's faults, and even deliver speeches to the whole group in the house, as long as no one speaks to the common people, which may only be done by the prelates¹⁶³. The same subject is continued in the next chapter, where

it is explained that the Brotherhood of the Common Life is quite distinct from all secret societies¹⁶⁴.

The seventh chapter is perhaps the most interesting one of the whole treatise. It has been printed twice in the original since 1889, and once in the Dutch translation¹⁶⁵. As early as the year 1400 it had been translated by a monk in Brabant¹⁶⁶, and not long after this date it spread across all of Germany, being copied in great numbers¹⁶⁷. In the table of contents this chapter is entitled: "It is permitted to read and have Dutch (Germanic) books; what Dutch (Germanic) books are dangerous for laymen and what are prohibited"¹⁶⁸. We have seen that Groote shortly before his death translated parts of the Bible and a great many church hymns. If he had lived several years longer, he would undoubtedly have translated a great deal more into the Dutch vernacular. Now Zerbolt regarded it his duty to continue in part the work left unfinished by Groote. Each disciple performed his fitting share. Cele took over Groote's interest in educational reforms; John Brinckerinck became a leader among the Sisters of the Common Life; Radewijns was the appointed guide of the whole body of Groote's disciples, — the great physician of the mentally and spiritually diseased, the friend of the poor, the sorrowful, and the homeless; but Zerbolt inherited the master's love for books, and for learning; it was he who had to defend the new brotherhood with weapons too heavy and cumbersome for Radewijns' use; it was he who became the only distinguished scholar in the house at Deventer, and its most influential author till the days of Hegius, Murnellius, and Erasmus.

To read the "sacred writings", as long as they contain no heresy or errors, particularly, if they are easy to understand, and in so far as they do not disagree with

the canonical writings in style or subject matter, is permissible and praiseworthy, claims Zerbolt. This can be proved in the following manner. If laymen are not allowed to read such books, it will be necessary to state why, that is, because they are laymen and unlearned, and for such it is not fit to read or study religious writings; or, although it is not prohibited for laymen to read them, nevertheless they shall not be permitted to read them in their native tongue. But it would be wrong to make such an assertion. For in the first place, laymen are not forbidden to read such works on account of being laymen, as is plainly inferred from several decisions found in the Canon Law¹⁶⁹. Augustine even reprehends laymen for being unwilling to read religious writings. Chrysostom does the same. Jerome exhorts even women to study the Scriptures, as is done also by Gregory¹⁷⁰. There are many laymen to-day, Zerbolt remarks, who spend a great deal of their time in reading wholly impractical and useless stories and fables about knights errant, the war of Troy, and similar subjects. Would it not be far better for them to study the Scriptures instead¹⁷¹? And what does the Bible have to say about this matter? The New Testament commands us more frequently to study God's precepts than does the Old Testament, but in the latter many commandments are given to read and study the Scriptures, as for example in Deuteronomy, ch. VI and ch. XI, and in many other places. In Deuteronomy, ch. XI, we read: "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest

up. And thou shalt write them upon the door post of thine house, and upon thy gates". That such commandments were not addressed to the clergy only is very plain indeed. From these and many other proofs which might be given, it clearly appears that laymen are not prohibited from reading religious writings, simply because they are laymen¹⁷².

Now we still have to prove that it is not forbidden to read religious writings in the vernacular. Much evidence can be brought forward to establish this point also. In the first place, we may say that the greater part of the Old Testament was written for the Hebrews in Hebrew, which was the vernacular for them. Similarly, the New Testament was drawn up in the Greek vernacular with the exception of the Gospel of Matthew, and Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, which were directed to Hebrews, hence written in their vernacular. Some say that Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans in Latin. At any rate, the whole or nearly the whole of the Bible was written in another language than Latin.

In the second place, we find that many a missionary translated parts of the Bible into the language of the people he tried to convert. Dorotheus writes that Bartholomew, when he came to India, translated the Gospel of St. Mark into the language used there. This he surely would not have done, had he thought it wrong for any one to read the Bible in the vernacular. The sole reason why the Bible is now read in Latin, is on account of this language being so widely used¹⁷³. The Hebrews read the Old Testament in Hebrew, the Greeks had Greek Bibles, the Chaldeans had the Scriptures in their own language. In the days of old the Syrians and the Arabs read the Bible in the vernacular. Ulfilas translated it into Gothic. The Bible has been translated

for the Egyptians, the Slavs, the Armenians, and if one were to search further he might find a translation of parts of the Bible in every language under the sun¹⁷⁴! For when the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles on that great day of Pentecost, many devout men were present and each heard the Apostles speak in his native tongue, for a sign that the gospel of Christ was to be preached in every language on the globe. Yes, in all languages except the Dutch or Teutonic? Would not that be a curious, a ridiculous thing? Impossible. Why should not they, the Brethren of the Common Life, who counted many laymen among their members, be allowed to read the Bible in the vernacular? Every one endowed with an infinitesimal spark of intelligence would at once admit that they were permitted to study the Bible in Dutch. Not only permissible it was, but meritorious and quite praiseworthy¹⁷⁵.

But it would not be wise to read all books indiscriminately; laymen are not allowed to read heretical works for example. They should study those writings which plainly and openly discuss simple doctrines, as was indicated by Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, the third chapter, and in the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Augustine gives us similar instructions, and Chrysostom also. There are certain parts of the Bible which are more or less obscure, as the Revelation by St. John. Such books ought to be explained and properly interpreted for laymen to comprehend their hidden meaning. What benefit could one derive from the study of books one could never hope to understand? Hugo of St. Victor and Augustine have taken great pains to explain this matter. One should also avoid those books which use profane and abusive language in dealing with the most sacred subjects. There are such Teutonic

works in existence, like certain sermons by Eckhardt. And finally, laymen should read no religious works in the vernacular that deviate from the doctrines promulgated by the acknowledged leaders in the Church¹⁷⁶.

Chapter VIII of the "Treatise on the Common Life" is devoted to the subject of obedience. The Brethren of the Common Life had taken no vows, for they did not intend to form a monastic organization. Consequently they could not bestow so great authority upon their superior or rector as was the case with the regular clergy. Not a single member of their house was obliged or compelled to obey the instructions of the rector. They did not promise to obey any office-holder in such manner. No matter how humble and how ignorant one might be, no one, however virtuous, talented or noble, could threaten him with punishment, for no one expected him to render homage to any superior in that way. For they had decided to obey Christ only, and to imitate the Apostles. If one were to find the kingdom of heaven, Christ had said, one should become like unto a little child. The greatest men in God's kingdom were those who not only obeyed their superiors, but also their equals, and even their inferiors. In the apostolic church all members had been considered each other's superiors and equals, — all as members of one body.

These and similar questions Zerbolt discussed in chapter eight of his treatise. All men were expected to render obedience to their superiors, he began, laymen as well as the clergy. For this reason the Church has condemned that sect which claims that man may attain to such perfection in this life that he no longer has to obey any law or commandment issued either by temporal or ecclesiastical powers. But in houses like the one in which Zerbolt was living one found oneself transported

into a wholly different atmosphere. Here all men were considered equal¹⁷⁷.

Yet no society can exist without law and order. It is as with a family, where the father is like a king in his kingdom. The children and the domestics all obey the master of the house, and he takes care of the whole family¹⁷⁸. Yet there is a great difference also between the house of the brethren and a family. In a family we find inferiors obeying a superior. In the brethren-house one finds equals correcting and admonishing each other as equals, not as a father treats his children¹⁷⁹. Is such kind of obedience permissible? It is, according to Peter, Augustine, Bernard, and Thomas Aquinas¹⁸⁰. The fact is, there could not be harmony or peace in such a house without this sort of obedience¹⁸¹. It is permissible then for the Brethren of the Common Life to have a rector to take care of the house, and to obey each other's wishes, in order to promote peace and harmony.

Is it also permissible for them to confess their sins to each other? Some declare they should not do this, but these people are wrong, says Zerbolt in chapter nine. One may confess one's sins to laymen. In case of necessity one may even confess one's mortal sins to a laymen¹⁸². And as for venial sins, one is permitted to confess them at any time. For in the sixth chapter of James we read: "Confess your faults one to another"¹⁸³. And although the learned doctors and theologians are not agreed on this subject, nevertheless we are permitted to confess our sins to laymen. But it seems best to confess to priests whenever possible. To-day the custom of confessing sins to one another is scarcely ever practised. Perhaps because we have so many priests, or because many doctors are opposed to the practice¹⁸⁴.

It certainly is permissible, Zerbolt continues, to confess daily shortcomings to each other. For such a humble confession almost in itself brings one forgiveness of the sins committed¹⁸⁵. In the second place, this kind of confession will teach us more clearly the nature of sin, the difference between vice and virtue, and the various remedies for each vice¹⁸⁶. It is easily understood that for this kind of confessions we do not so much need a person who has the keys of authority, as one with experience in spiritual affairs, who can teach us to fight temptations and the devil's attacks¹⁸⁷. When somebody reproved Arsenius for confessing his sins to an unlearned farmer who knew a great deal about spiritual exercises, he answered: "I have learned Latin and Greek, but the alphabet of this farmer I have thus far failed to decipher". Thirdly, if one is accustomed sincerely to reveal his shortcomings, he finally becomes ashamed of having to admit the repeated yielding to the same temptation, and firmly resolves to defeat the enemy who sent that temptation. Confession also frees us more quickly from the snares of the tempter¹⁸⁸.

This non-sacramental confession, Zerbolt argues, was once very common among virtuous men and highly praised, but now it is not common and some consider it wrong¹⁸⁹. Here we have the secret of the institution founded by Groote: a protest against the formalism of the Church in the fourteenth century. One by one the commandments of Christ had been disregarded as too difficult to follow. Even the clergy generally were disregarding them, and what was infinitely worse, the men who wanted to return to the customs of the apostolic church were attacked by the very leaders in Christendom. The Brethren of the Common Life were called heretics, — they were attacked for trying to obey, where

their enemies refused to obey. They were not to live the common life, nor to have a rector, nor to read religious books in the vernacular. To confess their sins to each other was said to be prohibited, though James had plainly commanded all Christians to practise it frequently.

What else was wrong about the new brotherhood? Groote had prepared a schedule for the men who had decided to live the common life, according to which they were to regulate their daily tasks¹⁹⁰. The brethren had chosen a rector soon after Groote's death¹⁹¹, and now they had a procurator besides¹⁹², while some or all of the members practised a certain course of spiritual exercises. Although it is impossible to tell exactly what sort of a constitution they had in Zerbolt's day, inasmuch as the original written constitution was drawn up after 1413¹⁹³, certain it is that they were following definite rules. That was wrong, their enemies said. Hence the tenth chapter of the treatise is intended by Zerbolt to defend this feature of the brotherhood's organization¹⁹⁴. The same subject is continued in the eleventh or last chapter. To perform manual labor at stated times, and to read books, to fast, pray, and meditate regularly is permitted, says Zerbolt, not only to monks but to all virtuous men¹⁹⁵. For even the simplest laborers eat, work, rest, and sleep at stated times¹⁹⁶. Therefore the Brethren of the Common Life too are allowed to have their rules or regulations. And here the treatise ends.

Zerbolt's theological views are most clearly set forth in his "Spiritual Ascensions", the work which exercised such a profound influence on Catholic Europe of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, particularly on Ignace Loyola. Based on and partly copied after the "Treatise on Spiritual Exercises" by Radewijns, Zerbolt's book

on the spiritual ascensions repeats the views set forth by Radewijns, which views are supplemented by certain chapters found in the "Reformation of the Faculties of the Soul", — also written by Zerbolt. They form a course of spiritual exercises, which were practised by thousands, worked over by Mauburn (or Mombaer), and finally incorporated, though changed to some extent, by Loyola in his "Spiritual Exercises", as we shall have occasion to observe in another chapter¹⁹⁷.

Man fell from his privileged state of innocence in paradise. This was the first fall¹⁹⁸; the second fall of man is due to his sins on earth¹⁹⁹. "If one wishes to find the kingdom of heaven", says Zerbolt, "one must steadily keep in view whence he originally came, — what he was before the fall, in order that he may know how to regain his lost estate, for it is useless to strive after perfection, if one knows not what such perfection implies. Man must in all his spiritual exercises remember his final end: purity of heart and love²⁰⁰. To purify the heart is to extinguish evil desire, which we may also call the reformation of the soul or the mind²⁰¹. For Oh man, thy mind, which is more exalted than all mortal creatures, becomes defiled in subjecting itself through improper affection to temporal objects²⁰². Explore your sinful nature, strive to realize the extent of your fall, and carefully examine your evil deeds each day²⁰³. For there is also a third fall, which for example happened to the prodigal son, when he went among the swine²⁰⁴. In this condition man continually commits mortal sins.

Since we can distinguish three falls or descents, there must also be three ascents, each divided into several steps or stages. As man ascends the steps, he gradually reforms his intellect, his will, and his memory, for these are the three faculties of the soul²⁰⁵. During the first

ascent he leaves the ways of the godless, as the prodigal left the swine²⁰⁶. He begins to confess his sins and to show repentance²⁰⁷. During the second ascent his repentance is sufficient to bring forgiveness, but that is not enough²⁰⁸. Three things are needed before he reaches the third ascent, namely: fear of the Lord, hope, and love. Zerbolt begins with fear, for often he had read this text: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom". In the first place, this holy fear plainly exposes the evil fruits of sin²⁰⁹. One also should reflect often on the approach of death²¹⁰, the last judgment²¹¹, and the pains in hell²¹². The second step of the second ascent is hope, the hope of future joy²¹³. Then follows the third step, where the active life begins. Here one learns to love, after having purified the heart. And here one commences the real exercises.

Zerbolt asks, How are we to purge ourselves from sin, and acquire perfect love? Only through Christ, who is our model and example. For Christ said that no one could come to the Father but through him. It should be our aim to become his companions, his followers²¹⁴. Secondly, we should love and adore Christ both as God and man, and thirdly, through the example of Christ's humanity, we could rise to great heights of spiritual perfection, while, in looking upon his divinity as our mirror, we ourselves might obtain knowledge of and love for things divine²¹⁵. Just as Radewijns had devoted a considerable part of his "*Omnes inquit artes*" to the life of Christ²¹⁶, and as Thomas à Kempis, who was now collecting the material for the "*Imitation of Christ*", was soon to follow Radewijns, so Zerbolt also reserved thirteen chapters for this same subject²¹⁷.

The third ascent is directed against the evil consequences of the first fall or descent, commonly called

original sin. Zerbolt holds that it is our duty to cleanse our hearts in so far as we are able, humanly speaking, from the tares introduced into our blood by Adam's sin with Eve²¹⁸. The first thing to do is to extinguish vice, as Radewijns also had said²¹⁹. Then follow about a dozen other chapters, some of which remind us forcibly of certain passages in the "Treatise on the Common Life"²²⁰, but they contain nothing new.

Zerbolt wrote his two mystical works shortly before his death, which occurred in 1398. In November, 1398, the Brethren of the Common Life of Deventer had returned from Amersfoort²²¹. Radewijns was ill, wherefore Zerbolt was sent to an old friend north of Deventer. On his return he caught an infectious disease and died on the 4th of December²²². With him the house at Deventer lost its scholar, author, and defense. Radewijns, heart-broken as he was, passed away on the 25th of March, 1400, and the centre of the "New Devotion" shifted northward to Windesheim and Zwolle.

VI

The monastery of Windesheim had been founded in the year 1386 by Groote's followers at Deventer, who wished to materialize his plans. They wanted a permanent place of refuge for those among their number who preferred the monastic life, and a place that might afford a temporary shelter to the brethren left behind at Deventer, in case of need²²³. "For this reason did they decide to build a monastery", says Rudolph Dier, "because they, living the simple, common life, were afraid of further persecutions by rivals, and thus, if some of their members would be actually living in a

monastery, the others would be protected by them"²²⁴. The brethren in Radewijns' vicarage had felt no need of such protection until they had introduced the common life. In 1386, however, we find them looking for a site for their new monastery. They found one near Hattem on the Veluwe, about three miles south-west of Zwolle. After having secured permission from the Duke of Gelderland to erect some buildings there, they went to their ecclesiastical lord, the Bishop of Utrecht. Radewijns and six other men were sent to tell the bishop about their plans. "Do not build that monastery in Gelderland", the bishop told them, "but somewhere in my territory east of the Yssel". Now it happened that one of the men, a certain Berthold ten Hove, owned some property there, wherefore the brethren agreed to build on his land, which was situated at Windesheim in the Yssel valley, three miles south-east of Zwolle²²⁵.

First one man was sent to make the necessary preparations; later five others were added, and one was appointed procurator²²⁶. They began to work at once. The site was found to be a lonely tract of land with some few willows on it²²⁷, but no buildings of any kind to house the men²²⁸. A small elevation was selected for the buildings. This spot, they were told, had never been flooded by the Yssel²²⁹. Soon gifts came pouring in: Lambert Stuerman, of whom Groote had caught the pest, as they thought, but who had recovered, gave 100 French crowns; some one else gave 200, and a third one 136. Henry of Wilsen, one of the six men sent to inspect the grounds, sold all he had, and handed the money over to the brethren at Deventer. Many among his relatives and acquaintances contributed, so that the amount required for the erection of the buildings was soon raised. Encouraged by this the men at Windes-

heim worked with redoubled energy. In October of the year 1387 the monastery proper, with its church, had been finished²³⁰. All was now ready for the dedication. The six brethren were to take the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. But, although they had been instructed by Groote and Radewijns in the essentials of the Christian religion, they knew practically nothing about the monastic life and its ceremonies. They decided to spend a few days at the Augustinian monastery of Eemsteyn near Dordrecht, where some of Groote's best friends were now practising the rules of the Augustinian Canons Regular with the ardor of new devotion²³¹. Here they were kindly accepted and initiated into the rituals of the Augustinian order, which the monks of Eemsteyn had learned from those of Groenendaal, Ruysbroeck's monastery²³². On the 17th of October the dedication took place. The brethren went through the customary ceremonies, and each of them read from a strip of parchment the vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity. Just those and no others. No vows of obedience to the bishop of Utrecht, no promises of allegiance to any party or power, and no submission to any rules except those they were to formulate themselves. What was the cause of this independent attitude? Perhaps it was, as Acquoy suggests, the inborn love for personal liberty so characteristic of the Frisians and the Saxons²³³.

There stood the little monastery with its thatched roofs among the willows planted beside the still waters. Who would have thought in 1387 that this humble convent would soon be sending its missionaries all over the Low Countries and thence into the farthest outpost of the German Empire; that it would bring about the only lasting monastic reform in fifteenth century Europe, and incorporate within its fold some of the most famous

monasteries in the West? Though its men were first taught by the monks of Eemsteyn near Dordrecht, Groenendaal near Brussels, and St. Victor at Paris, not long thereafter it surpassed them all in moral force and religious zeal.

This apparently marvelous success may not seem strange, however, to one who has noted how the founders of Windesheim spent their lives. Under the leadership of Henry of Höxter (17 October 1386–17 October 1387) and that of William Keynkanp (October 1387–November 1391) the works of love and faith were plentiful²³⁴. Particularly during the priorate of John Vos of Heusden (1391–1424) Windesheim was the pride of Groote's followers, and from 1400–1424 it was the centre of the "New Devotion". So great was the love among the Brethren of the Common Life at Deventer and their friends at Windesheim in those early years that all their possessions were considered almost as one common fund, placed at the disposal of the one who needed them most²³⁵: In 1392 Deventer and Windesheim founded the monastery of Mariendaal near Arnhem. John Ketel, the pious cook at Deventer, who possessed 1300 florins, gave the whole sum to the founders, and Radewijns also gave some money²³⁶.

John Vos of Heusden was in fact the greatest prior Windesheim ever had. Born at Heusden in 1363, he had come to Deventer to receive instruction in the cathedral school of St. Lebewin²³⁷. Radewijns had introduced him to Groote one day. The first meeting had been decisive. Groote had looked at him with one of those penetrative glances of his, which seemed to pierce one's very soul, and said: "This is the man I have sought; with him I will do something worth while on earth"²³⁸. Till 1388 he had remained with the other

brothers in Radewijns' vicarage. But the monastery called him²³⁹, and in 1391 he was elected prior²⁴⁰.

The first thirty years were a time of great moral strength and rapid growth. Of the forty brethren invested before 1424, one half became rectors or priors of monasteries built or reformed under their supervision²⁴¹. For there were other great reformers in those early days besides John Vos of Heusden. There was John à Kempis, a disciple of Groote and later of Radewijns²⁴². At Deventer and Windesheim he was a model of piety, and later he became rector and prior of several monasteries in succession²⁴³. Then there was Arnold of Calcar, sub-prior at Windesheim for 35 years²⁴⁴, and Henry Wilde, one of the six founders, who was sent to St. Victor at Paris to study the rules of the Augustinian order²⁴⁵; Henry Wilsen, once a prominent magistrate at Kampen, and a convert of Groote²⁴⁶, Berthold ten Hove, also converted by Groote²⁴⁷, John Scutken, another disciple of Groote²⁴⁸, and Albert Wijnberghen²⁴⁹.

It should be noted, however, that whatever Windesheim possessed before the year 1400 was a gift from the Brethren of the Common Life and their friends at Deventer. And similarly, when a monastery was built for the Augustinian Canonesses Regular, it was founded by the Sisters of the Common Life of Deventer.

In 1383 the sisters had secured a rector and confessor in the person of John van den Gronde²⁵⁰. When Groote was about to die, he had promised to send "little flowers" from heaven²⁵¹. But for several years his promise remained unfulfilled. The rector was getting old, and could devote but a small part of his time to their care, as he often went out preaching, or to hear confessions of the sisters at Zwolle, or the brethren at Mount St. Agnes, three miles north-east of Zwolle²⁵². Left without

proper guidance, the Sisters of the Common Life at Deventer gradually neglected Groote's instructions; discipline relaxed, and the blessings of manual labor were ignored. When Van den Gronde died²⁵³, a reform was at once instituted by his capable successor, named John Brinckerinck. This brother was one of the most ardent followers Groote ever had, for he had attended the master on nearly all his trips. He became as close a friend of Groote as John Cele had been²⁵⁴. Not being able to find a single monastery in or near the Yssel valley where Christ was imitated, he had joined the Brethren of the Common Life at Deventer²⁵⁵. In 1392 he left their house for the "House of Master Gerard", — Groote's ancestral home, — this being the year in which Van den Gronde passed away.

Brinckerinck has rightly been called the second founder of the "House of Master Gerard"²⁵⁶. The moment he entered the building, the sisters felt that their life of ease was ended. They were told to lead the common life again, to work with their own hands and to discontinue begging for alms. "You must either work or leave the house", was his command. But they stayed, for he at once won both their love and respect²⁵⁷. It was said that rays of holiness radiated from him²⁵⁸. Soon his fame spread beyond the walls of Deventer. From Zeeland, Friesland, Münster, and Cologne all sorts of persons came to the "House of Master Gerard" for counsel and religious instruction²⁵⁹. And the sisters, inspired by his saintliness, were full of religious fervor²⁶⁰. Soon the old home of Groote was found altogether too small. Four other houses were founded at Deventer during Brinckerinck's life-time²⁶¹. Says one early biographer: "So great a fire of the Holy Ghost was kindled among those saintly sisters in the House of Master Gerard that

the whole country around here grew warm with it, and all this as the result of the doctrine and instruction of their father, John Brinckerinck"²⁶².

Meanwhile some of the clergy were not pleased. Others were filled with holy anger, because the poor women read books in the vernacular, which was considered reprehensible by certain members of the clergy at that time. The sisters should immediately stop this evil practice, they said, and when they saw that their orders were disregarded, they attacked the sisters publicly. At last Brinckerinck found it necessary to defend them in church, where he held a lengthy discourse on the subject of reading books in the vernacular. The arguments used on this occasion he had gleaned from a book he had read in the library of the brethren-house²⁶³, which probably had been composed by Zerbolt.

There were other reasons why the Sisters of the Common Life were attacked in those early days, — the same reasons which caused the Brethren of the Common Life to seek protection in a monastery. Many a time Brinckerinck had to ascend the pulpit in the church of St. Mary at Deventer to defend the sisters. It should not surprise us to learn that they too wanted to found a convent, for the times were so different from what they are to-day. On the seventeenth of June, 1400, Brinckerinck called the sisters together to draw up the necessary plans. They possessed a piece of land near the Yssel, three miles north of Deventer²⁶⁴. Here they decided to build their home. But it was a lonely tract of land they had selected, — marshy and unattractive. Ditches had to be dug, stumps rooted up, holes filled with sand; in most places the surface of the soil had to be raised six feet. Undaunted by hardship, fatigue, and discomfiture, the women did the work, assisted by the

brethren of the "House of Florentius" and later by hired laborers. Before that year was over, the first buildings, made of wood, were finished²⁶⁵. In 1401 the sisters bought some more land, in 1406 still more; they built a barn also, and soon they had become prosperous farmers, possessing a fine herd of sheep, cows, pigs, and who knows what else? The monotonous brown of the murky soil had been replaced by soft green grass²⁶⁶. And soon the wooden cloister buildings were exchanged for a fine brick convent, — the convent of Diepenveen²⁶⁷.

VII

After Zerbolt's death the centre of the "New Devotion" had traveled northward from Deventer to Windesheim and Diepenveen. It was to shift still farther to the north, for in the city of Zwolle a flourishing brethren-house had attracted many devout from Flanders, Brabant, Friesland, Westphalia, and other districts. Soon it opened its doors to a Wessel Gansfort, an Alexander Hegius, and a Rudolph von Langen, and before long it began to send out missionaries to several other cities, such as Groningen, 's-Hertogenbosch, and Doesburg, where daughter-houses were founded. The reform of the school at Zwolle was the beginning of a mighty revival of learning. And although this intellectual revival found its most perfect expression in the labors of Hegius at Deventer, Murmellius at Münster, and Dringenberg at Schlettstadt, Zwolle was the place which provided the source material, and gave the movement its impetus.

Among Groote's first and most influential disciples was Henry Foppens of Gouda. Anxious to imitate his master as friend of poor school boys, he bought a house at Zwolle, where he intended to lodge some of them²⁶⁸.

Also as preacher and leader of the Sisters of the Common Life at Zwolle he became a worthy follower of Groote²⁶⁹. Then there was Reynold of Drenen, pastor at Zwolle²⁷⁰, and blind John Ummen, a very pious man, who together with two other laymen, named Jacob Wittecoep and Wychmannus Ruerinck, bought a lot next to Foppen's house. On this lot a house was built, where the three laymen in question lived the common life, acting upon Groote's advice²⁷¹. We might therefore call them the first Brethren of the Common Life, for they had kept no private property of their own²⁷². On the 5th of July, 1384, the house was sold to Groote, lest the heirs might claim it some day²⁷³. "These three men", says Jacob Voecht of Utrecht, "were therefore the first Brethren of the Common Life at Zwolle, to which number many others were added later, among whom blind John Ummen was foremost; he became their rector and procurator. Together they moved to Mount St. Agnes, where Groote showed them the site for their new house"²⁷⁴.

The first brethren-house at Zwolle was not a success, for the men who had founded it moved to a lonely hill, three miles away from the city, where but few people were found to give them employment, and few boys to be cared for. A better fate was reserved for the second institution. On April 4, 1393, Frederick van Wevelinkhoven, Bishop of Utrecht, died. His successor, named Frederick van Blankenheim, was a friend of Groote's disciples. The brethren at Zwolle, as soon as they were made aware of the new bishop's friendly attitude, decided once more to found a house, hoping that this time they would not be compelled to seek protection and rest in a solitary place²⁷⁵. There was a certain Meynoldus of Windesheim, a disciple of Groote,

who had sold his property and had come to Zwolle, where in a humble dwelling he lived with a few poor school boys²⁷⁶. Encouraged by the success of the Brethren of the Common Life at Deventer, he wanted to found a house where priests and clerics might live the common life. A suitable site was secured, and a fine building erected, called "House of St. Gregory". This happened in the year 1396²⁷⁷.

Who was to be elected rector of the second institution at Zwolle? Meynoldus of Windesheim, the real founder, felt himself unfit for so exalted a task. It was not for him, he said, to become the spiritual guide of the men and boys living with him in his house. One day he came to Florentius Radewijns, rector at Deventer. "Can you lend me one of your clerics"? he asked of Radewijns. "Yes", was the answer, "take this youth with you; his name is Gerard Scadde of Calcar". At the expiration of one year Meynoldus returned to Deventer with Gerard. "The young man should at once be ordained priest", he said to Radewijns, "in order that he may become our rector". Radewijns gladly assented²⁷⁸. In 1396, then, the Brethren of the Common Life at Zwolle obtained both a new house and a capable rector. They were instructed in the ways and means practised at Deventer; the rules of Deventer, as yet unwritten, became theirs also²⁷⁹. And with these rules they acquired religious fervor in great measure, surpassing their friends at Deventer for a time, as will be shown in the following chapter.

Thus far we have but casually mentioned the name of Zwolle's great teacher, John Cele. A native of Zwolle, he received a master's degree at some university, — Prague perhaps. Through Groote's friendship he seems to have obtained his position as rector of the city school

at Zwolle, in or shortly after the year 1374²⁸⁰. The fact that Groote selected him as his trusted companion on his visit to Ruysbroeck is significant. Groote often corresponded with him in later years²⁸¹, and also often came to visit him²⁸². In almost every respect Cele tried to imitate his beloved friend. Not only did he, as Groote had done, refuse to become a priest, declaring that a priest's responsibilities were greater than those of the angels²⁸³, but he also stayed a short time (1381-1382) at Monnikhuizen²⁸⁴, the Carthusian monastery near Arnhem, where Groote also had spent two years. And, as had been the case with Groote, he found but little satisfaction there²⁸⁵. Duty, he thought, had called him back to Zwolle: "his light should no longer be hid beneath a bushel".

Cele brought about the reform of the city school at Zwolle, and succeeded in attracting as many as 1200 boys at a time from districts far removed from the Yssel valley. He became the founder and originator of what we now call the secondary schools, and it was his school that served as model for those of Dringenberg, Hegius, Murmellius, Melanchton, Sturm, Calvin, the Jesuits, and all their followers. There were several causes which contributed to his success. In the first place, after having been taught by Groote to make a careful distinction between the form and the inner essence of things, he pruned away from his curriculum all dead formalism, at least as far as he was able. Of what use was the study of Canon Law, medicine, and astronomy to the average school boy, he used to ask, consciously in imitation of Groote's standpoint²⁸⁶. And as for the study of religion and the harmonious development of one's mental and spiritual self, the Gospels, the Epistles of the New Testament, and other biblical works, together

with the Fathers, were a more fruitful source of instruction than the subtle and wholly impractical scholastic disputes engaged in by the learned doctors of Paris and Cologne. Scholasticism was as good as any other system of philosophy, but there were different kinds of scholasticism: the living and the dead, the practical and the formal, as there were different kinds of religion or faith, such as the theoretical and the personal, such as the religion of Christ versus that of the Pharisees.

John Cele did this thing, which was new. Three times a day (on holidays at least) he read and explained to his pupils selections from the Bible: from the Epistles in the morning, the Gospels in the afternoon, and from some other book in the evening²⁸⁷. He exhorted his pupils to write down those parts of his addresses which seemed most useful to them. The life of Christ was continually referred to as the only reliable pattern we could find on earth. To imitate him was Cele's chief aim; it should be theirs also, he said. "Cele himself", says Busch, "as a true imitator of Christ, never taught us anything which he had not previously practised, in order that he might be our example"²⁸⁸. The pupils were taught to pray both in Latin and in Dutch; Busch gives us both versions of a prayer taught by Cele²⁸⁹. He never undertook anything without commending it first to God in prayer²⁹⁰, for at all times he felt himself in the presence of God²⁹¹. The one chief cause of his fame, says Schoengen, the archivist at Zwolle, was his maxim: "The kingdom of heaven consisteth not in knowledge and speech, but in work and virtue"²⁹². Cele was not at all opposed to book-learning. He asserted that God's will or testament was expressed in "sacred writings", and that the Church would long have perished had it not been for the reading of good books²⁹³. Here he was

trying to break away from the official stand-point of the Church, according to which a virtuous man had no need of reading the Bible any longer. Cele and Zerbolt proved themselves in this respect at least closer to Groote's principles than Radewijns, who stressed the importance of intuition or inspiration more than the scholarly Groote had done. Zerbolt, we remember, had followed Groote's view in realizing the needs of the masses. The farmers and the burghers should read the Bible for themselves, he had argued, and since most of them could not read Latin, they ought to be given an opportunity of reading the Bible in their own tongue. Cele, in following these same views, invited all the inhabitants of Zwolle to attend his discourses, thus giving them a chance to gain a better understanding of the passages he advised them to study²⁹⁴.

But there were a great many other books to be studied besides the Bible and the Fathers, in Cele's opinion. Not a single subject was scrapped by him from the curriculum then in vogue. It was wise to examine everything, he thought, but one should learn to select the best, the useful, the practical. There was no harm in the study of geometry, astronomy, logic, and medicine, as long as one used those subjects as a means of reaching a certain end. If one was to become a priest some day, he would not need to know so very much about geometry, for example, nor would the future merchant or farmer have much occasion to study medicine, or astronomy. The Bible should be studied by everybody, for all men were created in God's image; they all should strive to regain a part of their lost heritage. Virtue and love were essentials, character a necessity, if one wished to build up a society where peace and order would reign. One should also develop one's intellect, however. The

priest ought to know a great deal about literature and philosophy. The teacher, so long as he avoided as much as possible the merely theoretical, or formal side of things, would be justified in retaining all subjects taught in the schools thus far²⁹⁵. Cele, therefore, retained the exercises in scholasticism, grammar, logic, ethics, and philosophy²⁹⁶. "But although he took great pains in teaching these subjects with effect", says Busch, "nevertheless he did not thereby diminish his interest, — nay, he even increased his zeal in instructing his pupils in the sacred writings, good manners, a saintly and Christian life, and the fear and love of God. For in the morning he would explain an Epistle, and in the evening some other part of the Scriptures, addressing the whole school"²⁹⁷.

Cele was a practical teacher. He saw that no two boys were exactly alike, nor were they equally well supplied with funds. With the Brethren of the Common Life at Zwolle he made arrangements to house them in a suitable manner²⁹⁸. Those who could afford it were expected to pay the brothers for their room and board, while Cele asked a certain sum as tuition fee. The poorer class of boys, of whom there were a great number, instead of being compelled to beg for alms, were kindly taken care of by the brethren, and Cele even gave them money for the books, ink, and paper they needed in school²⁹⁹. In order to take care of each pupil's individual needs, he divided his school into eight classes. This arrangement may seem quite simple and natural to us to-day. We should remember, however, that this phase of Cele's reform was an innovation, a pedagogical discovery, we might say³⁰⁰. And this discovery, or invention, led to other discoveries. The "quadrivium" was included in the curriculum, and last but not least, in

the two highest classes special studies were taught by specialists³⁰¹. As the inevitable result of Cele's reforms, his pupils generally made more rapid progress at the universities than most other students³⁰².

Another factor which may partly explain Cele's fame was his way of keeping order in the school-room. The teachers of that time resorted to various forms of punishment, which in spite of, or rather as a result of, their harshness failed to bring about better discipline. Cele rightly reasoned that a teacher's personality was the great factor in the matter of order and discipline. He took a personal interest in every one of his pupils; as far as he was able, naturally. As to punishment, every form was too severe, if one had not first exhausted all the ways of correction taught him by sympathy and love³⁰³.

If he was right in asserting that the Church would have perished centuries ago without the use of books, then the clergy in particular, but all laymen also, should read much. Groote had held the same, and so had Zerbolt. And since there never could be too many good books in the world, Cele taught his students the elements of rhetoric. One feature of his method was the "rapiarium", or collection of excerpts, which every pupil of his had to make. From the Gospels and other books of the New Testament he selected the plainest and most helpful sayings. These he dictated in a loud voice to the whole school. "For he wanted his pupils to have the leading events and the most striking passages found in the Epistles and the Gospels collected in one copy-book, a theological excerpt-book, in which the most useful thoughts found in the sacred writings were gathered in brief extracts. This would enable them more easily to commit such passages to memory"³⁰⁴.

The influence exerted by him on the Europe of the fifteenth century is incalculable. Students, attracted by his fame, flocked to Zwolle from the bishoprics or principalities of Cologne, Trier, Louvain, Utrecht, Brabant, Flanders, Westphalia, Holland, Saxony, Cleves, Gelderland, and Frisia. Among the thousands of boys who between the years 1374 and 1417 were educated at Zwolle, a considerable number entered monasteries, where they helped to introduce better discipline, and more love for sound learning. "Paris, Cologne, Erfurt, and the Roman Curia testify how many learned men Cele's school sent out", is Busch's complacent remark. The whole population of Zwolle was changed for the better as a result of Cele's educational work. Among the prominent magistrates were found several of his pupils, from which we may infer that many a burgher of Zwolle, if not converted by Groote himself, became through Cele's influence a defender of the principles advocated by the "*Devotio Moderna*", or Christian Renaissance. "It is now more than forty years ago", Busch wrote in 1459, "that he migrated hence, and still his name is upon the lips of those who were fortunate enough to be instructed by him"³⁰⁵.

Although he was very generous in helping his poorer pupils, Cele made a great deal of money with his school. With this money he constructed a fine library in the church of St. Michael at Zwolle. There he placed a large collection of codices on theology, philosophy, and literature, to which all devout citizens were freely admitted. Furthermore, many of Cele's followers imitated his noble example by collecting books and lending them to others³⁰⁶. By this also the city of Zwolle became a centre of popular learning. The clergy in particular were woefully lacking in sound learning. And if the

Church was to be regenerated, if a lasting religious revival, so sadly needed, was to take place, the clergy would have to be instructed first of all, the laymen should be taught to exert themselves, and school teachers must break with the empty formalism and the dying scholasticism which were injuring both the Church and society. This had been Groote's message to the men and women of his day. Radewijns, Zerbolt, Vos of Heusden, Brinckerinck, and Cele each took over a part of Groote's work, repeating his message in their own way. Thus began that mighty religious and intellectual revival, the "New Devotion", or Christian Renaissance. Soon it succeeded in permeating the lives of the men and women living in the Yssel valley, then it spread in ever-widening circles across the continent. This was made possible by the strong organization built by the Brethren of the Common Life, which will be treated in the following chapter.

CHAPTER III

THE BRETHREN OF THE COMMON LIFE

I

From the year in which the "House of Florentius"¹ was built till the death of Radewijns in 1400 the brothers at Deventer led a very quiet and uneventful life. Radewijns was succeeded as rector by Amilius van Buren, an intimate friend of Thomas à Kempis, as will appear in a later chapter². It was his constant aim to preserve mutual love and harmony among the men. Often he would say to them: "There is one thing which we must all adhere to and observe: our status as Brethren of the Common Life; for although the monastic state is preferable in the opinion of the Church, nevertheless he who lives a saintly life outside of a monastery will receive the reward of saintliness"³.

Amilius carefully guarded the rules of the house, and during his rectorate large numbers of school boys flocked to Deventer, many of whom acquired the habit of visiting the brethren-house, where they were regularly instructed in the essentials of the Christian faith⁴.

It naturally followed that the brethren received most of their recruits from these boys⁵. In 1400 the community counted so many members that forty of them were sent to found other houses⁶. One young man went to Münster, where in the same year he induced a small number of followers to lead with him the common life⁷; a few others moved to Delft, also to found a house⁸. The rectorate of Amilius was therefore com-

pared with the reign of Solomon, while Radewijns' rule was thought to correspond to that of David⁹.

But Amilius van Buren did not reign so long as Solomon. During the first week in June, 1404, he felt the end of his life approaching. Calling all the members of the community together, he addressed them in a lengthy speech. "John of Haarlem shall be my successor", he concluded; "obey him, and let no one say to himself that John is still so young, or that you have read much more and know a great deal more than he does. It is our duty to love our fellow-men, and obey them all in order that we may properly humiliate ourselves". On June 10 Van Buren, the second rector of the Brethren of the Common Life at Deventer, passed away¹⁰.

John of Haarlem ruled the brethren for six years. In 1410 he was succeeded by Godfried Toorn, who was rector for forty years. Although he had to sustain a great deal of hatred and opposition from the enemies of the new brotherhood, his temper always remained serene. The sources also say that he knew how to search the inner recesses of the heart and to delve into the rich mines of theology and jurisprudence. Always looking beneath the surface of form and outward appearances, he was not satisfied with mere style. The brethren were encouraged by him to read as many books as possible, and to select those first which contained the most practical religious and moral teachings. "Father John Vos of Heusden", he used to remark, "was wont to restrain his men from reading Thomas Aquinas and other modern scholastics of his type on obedience and kindred subjects, hoping that they might thus retain their simplicity"¹¹. There were two virtues he never ceased to extol: friendship and chastity. "Brethren", he once exclaimed, "we have left all our relatives and acquaintan-

ces, our native country and other ties behind; we have come here to dwell together in this house that we might serve the Lord through the common life. If we, therefore, are querulous, impatient, or in any way unkind to each other, we shall become the most miserable among men. You will indeed kill me, if discord should arise among you"¹².

The man who uttered these words was by no means devoid of talent. He had been a teacher at Deventer¹³, and it was during his rectorate that the Brethren of the Common Life drew up their first written constitution. Before 1413 they had failed to secure official recognition from the papal see. True, the monks of Windesheim had defended them in 1395, the alumni of the University of Cologne had approved their mode of life, and Frederick van Blankenheim, bishop of Utrecht, had proved to be their faithful supporter; but the brethren wanted still more. In 1413 Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly came to the Yssel valley as papal legate for the Germanic peoples. He gave the brethren and sisters at Deventer several privileges, amongst them a document in which he officially confirmed the approbations signed by the Cologne jurists in 1398. Whether the cardinal personally requested or suggested that the brethren draw up a written constitution, we do not know. At any rate, it appears from the preamble to their first written constitution that the cardinal's official support had encouraged them to write down these rules which had been in vogue among them, lest their successors should forget their own constitution¹⁴.

In September, 1450, Godfried Toorn's health began to fail. His successor was elected by the brethren before he died. Six weeks later his death occurred, namely, on the 3rd of November¹⁵. The new rector was called

Egbert ter Beek (1450-1483). During the first year of his rectorate Cusa, the famous cardinal, mathematician, and reformer, came to Deventer. He must have enjoyed himself there, as in this very same city, supported by these very same brethren, he is said to have received part of his early education¹⁶. Quite naturally he offered them a great many privileges in the form of prebends, and similar things. But the rector flatly refused to accept them, being unwilling to depart from the ways of simplicity and humility taught by the first members of his brotherhood¹⁷.

Egbert ter Beek distinguished himself for his zeal in upholding the status of the Brethren of the Common Life. Many a day he spent in visiting the daughter-institutions in Flanders, Brabant, Holland, and Westphalia; anxiously watching, lest the encroaching armies of monasticism overwhelm the brotherhood. One day he heard that the rector of the local institution at Doesburg on the Yssel had invited the prior of Windesheim to change his house into a monastery of the Augustinian Canons Regular. He immediately hurried to the scene of operations. Yes, the prior was already there, having begun to invest the brethren. "What on earth are you doing here"? he exclaimed, addressing the brethren. "And what business brings you here"? was his remark to the prior of Windesheim. "Well", answered the prior in question, "have I done any wrong in advancing the brethren to the monastic state, which, as you must admit, is superior to yours"? "I make no objection", was Egbert's reply, "if you merely seek to induce laymen or secular clergy to enter monasteries, but you ought not to usurp our houses. This house has always been ours, and it shall remain ours. It was given to our brethren, in order that they might live the common life, and if

any of them should wish to become monks, they would be free to leave the house". Whereupon the bewildered prior, according to our chronicle, quickly left the place¹⁸.

It was during Ter Beek's rectorate that John Brugman, perhaps the most popular preacher the Low Countries ever produced, was changed from a Saul into a Paul. Even to-day the people throughout the Netherlands, who as a rule have not the slightest idea who Brugman was, or where he lived, still make him a proverb, often remarking after having listened to an unusually eloquent preacher: "He preaches like a Brugman"¹⁹. Like many a monk of his day, he had for a time been very bitter against the Brethren of the Common Life, who, as conscience but too plainly told him, were living more saintly and Christ-like lives without the protection of the monastic vows than most so-called religious people. After his "reformation" he suddenly changed his attitude, and thenceforth praised the brethren very highly in his sermons, letters, and treatises²⁰.

On the sixteenth day of April, 1483, Egbert ter Beek followed the other four rectors to the grave²¹. A few days later his body was solemnly carried to the churchyard by the mourning brethren. Future leaders of the German Renaissance were among those who attended the funeral, for in that year Alexander Hegius was called to Deventer as rector of the school of St. Lebwin's and Erasmus was one of the boys who had been given religious instruction by the brethren for several years past. From Zwolle the great revival of learning inaugurated by Groote and Cele had come traveling southward again, selecting Deventer as its centre till the death of Hegius. After 1483, the rectors of the brethren-house fade away into comparative oblivion²².

As for the different buildings used by the brothers at

Deventer, a few remarks will suffice. Radewijns' vicarage was later referred to as the "Antiqua Domus", or the "Ancient House", in distinction from the "Nova Domus", or the "New House", which was founded about the year 1398 for the school boys of the cathedral school²³. The house built in 1391 for the use of the members themselves, was called "Domus Domini Florentii", or "Heer Florenshuis", or "House of Master Florentius". Several plots of ground were added to their property from time to time, and additional buildings were erected for various purposes²⁴. The chief building occupied by the brethren at Deventer during the days of Erasmus was erected in 1441²⁵. And finally, those boys who could find no room in the "Nova Domus", or "Domus pauperum" ("New House", or "House for Poor Boys") were sent to two other houses: the "Hieronymushuis" ("House of Jerome") and the "Jufferenhuis", or "Juffer Wibbenhuis" ("House of Lady Wibben")²⁶.

II

In 1410 the brothers at Zwolle elected Theodore Herxen as their second rector — the man who for a period of thirty-three years was to become the acknowledged leader of the "New Devotion". Born in 1381, he had received his early education at Deventer. He was one of those devout school boys who were so kindly treated by the brethren of the House of Florentius. As a faithful follower of Gerard Groote, he wanted to train his inner self somewhere in a Carthusian monastery. One day he came to John Vos, prior at Windesheim, and asked him for advice. The prior saw at once how easily this pious youth could be persuaded to enter his monastery. Furthermore, he was rich in earthly possess-

ions, which Windesheim would be able to use to advantage. True, the young man had thus far hesitated to become a monk, inasmuch as his desire to win other souls for Christ had been urging him to remain in the world among people. The monastic state, however, was at that time considered by most religious folk as vastly superior to that of a preacher who had not taken the three vows. Now it happened that in those days the doctrine of self-denial still remained indelibly engraved in the hearts of Groote's disciples. Accordingly, the prior of Windesheim told the young man: "Do not enter this or any other monastery, but go to Gerard Scadde of Calcar, rector of the brethren at Zwolle, and ask him for admission into their house"²⁷.

On the 23rd of December, 1409, Gerard Scadde of Calcar died. Although Theodore Herxen was only twenty-nine, the brethren, struck by his great religious fervor, and aware of the superiority of his talents as educator, preacher, and scholar, elected him rector in Gerard's place²⁸. Herxen was at once a zealous preacher, a skillful teacher, and a versatile writer. How one could most successfully win children and youths for Christ's kingdom he set forth in three of his works, called: "A Book showing how to draw the Little Ones to Christ", "A Treatise concerning the Drawing of Youths to Christ", and "A Book concerning the Praiseworthy Efforts of the Brethren in drawing the Little Ones to Christ"²⁹. The Brethren of the Common Life were conscientiously imitating Groote in trying to secure recruits from the boys and girls (though chiefly boys) for God's army on earth. Theodore himself undoubtedly spent many an hour giving these boys religious instruction. Later he wrote down the results of his experiences, in the three above-named treatises.

As preacher and author he won great fame, for he preached to the people in their own language. Two big books were composed by him for laymen, which the brethren used to read from to the people on holidays. Among the many other works he wrote was a book called "Devout Exercises", which was read a great deal in his time. From far and near people came to him for advice and instruction³⁰, and the brethren themselves stood in such awe of him that a mere look of his would send them quailing with fear to their respective rooms. All devout men and women of Zwolle and its environment revered this pious leader of the "New Devotion". It was whispered among them that he held daily converse with angels³¹.

His influence must have been great upon some few at least among the many boys who came to him, as their custom was, to confess their sins. The sources tell of a very wayward son of a magistrate at Woudrichem, how his father had sent him to a monastery, whence he had returned home in a short time. Shortly after that he had been sent to Zwolle to attend school. Here he comported himself in a most disgraceful manner. The gravest misdemeanors were but trifles to him. One day he came to Herxen to tell what he had done and ask for absolution. "My dear boy", the rector replied, "no human being can absolve you from your sins, not on account of their great number, but of your state of mind. Not until you have utterly annihilated that evil force within you which prevents you from doing penance, not until you have firmly resolved to commit no one of these offenses any longer, can I absolve you from the guilt which now weighs down upon your soul. Go, and I will pray for you; try to sin no more, and I will struggle with you; and then return unto me once more. Then we shall rejoice together and

praise the Lord for his grace, for I must wait till God himself forgives you, ere I can absolve you from sin". The young reprobate went away, vaguely wondering why he, the well-favored son of a prominent magistrate, should be treated thus. But the rector of the brethren did not forget him, for he had been reminded by this youthful sinner of certain parables mentioned in the Gospels, which speak of the great joy in heaven caused by the sincere repentance of truly humble sinners. Finally, through love and sympathy, Herxen gained his end. The boy returned and was absolved³².

A man like this was bound to make enemies. Groote had preached the same views about repentance; he too had drawn a careful distinction between the true Church, consisting of a small group of devout believers, and the outer court, where many clergymen were dwelling. Groote, the first leader of the "New Devotion", had ruthlessly torn down the idols of indolence, self-indulgence, and mammon worship. His example was now being followed by Theodore Herxen, the fourth and last universally recognized leader of the same movement. And since Groote had been persecuted, Herxen could hardly escape the same fate.

There was a certain Liefard, rector of the Sisters of the Common Life in one of their six houses at Zwolle, who had failed to perform his duties as rector and confessor. As Liefard had many rich friends at Zwolle, Herxen was unable to remove him from his office. In the meantime the news of Liefard's scandalous behavior reached the bishop of Utrecht, and the man was imprisoned. Shortly before the imprisonment Liefard's friend, Theodore Henso, pastor at Zwolle, together with the cathedral chapter of St. Lebwin at Deventer had begun to compel the Sisters of the Common Life at

Zwolle to confess to the chaplains of his parish. This had grieved Herxen very much, for evidently the chaplains in question did not take life so seriously as one might expect of servants of Christ. Herxen went to Cologne, but the archiepiscopal curia of that city was bribed by his enemies at Deventer and Zwolle, wherefore he was now threatened with excommunication. One day the kind, old rector was hissed out of the church by a shouting mob, who, instigated by their spiritual father, cried: "Throw the Beghard into the water". The pastor even prohibited Herxen from hearing confessions of the school boys, although one of his predecessors had given Herxen this privilege, while it had been confirmed by Frederick van Blankenheim, bishop of Utrecht³³.

Herxen was followed by Albert Paep of Calcar (1457-1482). Thinking to divert for a time at least the dangers of attack from the various office-holders in the church of St. Michael, he invited the city council and the vicars of the local parish to supper one day. The magistrates were very sociable, but the vicars adopted a haughty attitude toward the humble brethren. "We discovered", says the chronicler, "that we had made no progress, for the vicars did not want to be corrected by us"³⁴. Although he does not tell us what the brethren wished to discuss with the vicars, we can easily guess their intention. It had long been the custom among the Brethren of the Common Life to confess their own faults to each other, as Zerbolt had pointed out in his "On the Common Life". Christ had warned his disciples never to speak evil of any one, except to the person who committed the evil in question. That there was a great deal amiss with the Church during the closing years of the fifteenth century must have been apparent to all honest men and women. It had been one of Groote's

chief tasks to point out the existing evils, but it was to the clergy themselves in his "Sermon against the Immoral Clergy". When he addressed the clergy, he spoke of their many faults, and the people's shortcomings were exposed in the people's presence. Such had been Groote's method in trying to reform the Church. His reformation had been continued by the Brethren of the Common Life. But exactly where he had met with the strongest resistance, they also were opposed. Hence Albert Paep, the third rector at Zwolle, had to cancel those suppers with the vicars of the local parish.

Albert Paep was in turn followed by other rectors, whose names need not be mentioned here³⁵; and, as was the case with the house at Deventer, a few brief remarks about the buildings belonging to the society will suffice. Mention has been made of the chief building, the "House of Gregory", where the brethren themselves lived³⁶. Several other buildings were used to house the great crowds of school boys from Frisia, Flanders, Brabant, Westphalia, Trier, Cologne, Liège, and Holland. There was the "Domus divitum scholarium" ("House for Rich Boys") for boys with means³⁷; the "Domus vicina" ("House next door"), or "Parva domus" ("Small House"), also for those whose expenses were paid by their parents or guardians³⁸; the "Domus pro mediocribus" ("House for the Middle Classes"), where boys were lodged who paid part of their expenses³⁹; and the "Domus pauperum scholarium" ("House for Poor Students")⁴⁰. As for the property donated to the Brethren of the Common Life at Zwolle, a long list of documents has been published by Dr. Schoengen, which shows that the brethren had other sources of income besides the copying of books⁴¹.

III

The brethren-houses of Deventer and Zwolle until the year 1520 were the two chief centres of the "New Devotion" outside of the monasteries. By these two all the other houses of the new brotherhood were founded, either directly or indirectly. As early as the year 1395 Radewijns, the first rector of the brethren at Deventer, was asked to found a congregation at Amersfoort. Three clerks were sent by him in the same year⁴². The next place in the Netherlands to ask for a few missionaries of the common life, was the city of Delft, where the magistrates, having heard of the rising fame and the good works of the brethren at Deventer, were anxious to secure a similar society of copyists and teachers. The procurator of the "Nova Domus" together with other members of the house at Deventer were sent to Delft. This seems to have occurred in the year 1403⁴³. There also was a house at Hoorn for a few years⁴⁴, which must be looked upon as a daughter-institution of the house at Deventer.

The first house founded by the men of Zwolle was that of Albergen, in eastern Overijssel. Its foundation took place in the year 1406⁴⁵. The next house was founded in 1407 at Hulsbergen near Hattem, a short distance west of the Yssel⁴⁶, and the one after that in 1424 at 's-Hertogenbosch⁴⁷. In 1425 the brethren at Zwolle were compelled to leave their house on account of an interdict⁴⁸. They moved to Doesburg, where a new community was established in 1426⁴⁹. The house at Groningen was founded between 1426 and 1432⁵⁰, that of Harderwijk on the Zuiderzee in 1441⁵¹, also by the brethren of Zwolle, the one at Gouda in 1445 by the brethren at Delft⁵², at Utrecht in 1474, also by the house

at Delft⁵³, and at Nijmegen in 1469 or 1470, by the brethren of 's-Hertogenbosch⁵⁴. The Brethren of the Common Life also had a house at Berlikum in Friesland⁵⁵, but at present we know very little about its history. The same is true of those other houses which may have existed without leaving us any records of their history. For as long as the minutes of the annual meetings held by the Brethren of the Common Life of the above-named houses at Zwolle have not been discovered, we shall know very little about the less important houses.

In Germany, the brethren had many houses. There was a congregation at Münster from the year 1400, founded by Henry of Ahaus, a missionary of the Deventer house⁵⁶. The same Henry of Ahaus instituted a society at Cologne in the year 1417 or earlier⁵⁷. There was a congregation at Osterberg near Osnabrück as early as the year 1410⁵⁸, and one at Osnabrück from 1415⁵⁹, at Herford from 1428⁶⁰, at Wesel from 1436⁶¹, and at Hildesheim since 1440⁶². The brethren at Cologne founded the houses at Wiesbaden, Butzbach near Mainz, Königstein on the Taunus, and Wolf on the Moselle⁶³. There were important houses at Rostock⁶⁴, Magdeburg⁶⁵, Marburg⁶⁶, Cassel⁶⁷, and Emmerich⁶⁸, and less important ones in Wurtemberg⁶⁹; also one at Kempen⁷⁰, and at Culm in Poland⁷¹.

In the Southern Low Countries houses of the Brethren of the Common Life were founded at Ghent⁷², Antwerp⁷³, Brussels⁷⁴, Grammont⁷⁵, Mechlin⁷⁶, Cambray⁷⁷, Liège⁷⁸, Louvain⁷⁹, and Wynoksberg⁸⁰.

The Sisters of the Common Life also succeeded in founding a large number of houses, particularly in the Yssel valley. At Deventer they had five houses⁸¹⁻⁸⁵. At Zwolle there were six⁸⁶. There were three houses at Zutphen, two at Doesburg, Kampen and Lochem, two at

Utrecht, one at Arnhem, Doetinchem, Gorinchem, and a host of other places⁸⁷. The "House of Master Gerard" at Deventer, the first institution, founded a community at Sonsbeke, Xanten, Essen, and Cologne⁸⁸, and reformed the houses at Neuss⁸⁹, Calcar⁹⁰, and Emmerich⁹¹. The house of the brethren at Zwolle had charge of nineteen sister-houses⁹².

Not all of the houses founded by the brethren or sisters of Deventer and Zwolle were equally prosperous, however. We have seen how the first institution of the brothers at Zwolle was a failure, inasmuch as the men had left the city for a community where only a few people were found to give them employment and still fewer school boys⁹³. Nearly all the brethren at Amersfoort joined the Franciscans in 1399⁹⁴. Between 1399 and 1405 the house regained part of its former strength, but in 1405 the majority of its members entered the monastery of St. Andriescamp⁹⁵, and in 1415 became Augustinian Canons Regular of the Windesheim Congregation⁹⁶. Two years afterwards, however, they left the monastery⁹⁷, and from that time the success of the house at Amersfoort was assured. At Delft the brothers were compelled by circumstances to exchange their rules for those of the third rule of St. Francis. In 1433 they joined the Augustinians Regular⁹⁸. Before 1436 the house was again occupied by Brethren of the Common Life, who remained there as such until Delft became Calvinistic⁹⁹. The house at Hoorn perished without leaving records of perceptible influence, which may also be said of the house at Berlikum. As for the institution founded at Albergen in 1406, it was changed into a monastery of the Windesheim Congregation in the year 1447¹⁰⁰. Albergen evidently was too small a place to support a brethren-house. After the year 1447 it became

the policy of the brothers at Deventer and Zwolle to recognize no houses founded in small towns. When the institution at Gouda for example asked for such official recognition, it was refused, as Gouda was said to be too small and too poor a place¹⁰¹. Not until 1456, that is, eleven years after the foundation of the house at Gouda, was it accepted as a member of the organization¹⁰².

At Culm in Poland (Culm became a part of Poland in 1466), near the frontier of Prussia, the brethren were confronted with difficulties of an entirely different nature. They had been invited by a certain Balthasar, a native of East Prussia, who, attracted by the fame of the school at Zwolle, had left his home in search of western culture. It was no small matter to migrate to so distant a country; nevertheless the brethren readily had granted Balthasar's request. Three men were sent in 1472. The country around Culm was not so pleasant a sight as the green pastures along the Yssel, or the smiling fields near Zwolle. The town itself contained but a few inhabitants, and not a single carpenter among them. A little hut was given to the brethren, — very shabby, and unfurnished, but it was love which prompted the owners to give it to them. Others there were, however, who vaguely wondered what those three foreigners wanted in lonely Culm. The brethren responded: "We have come here to instruct your children in the 'sciences' and virtues, as we are doing in the bishopric of Utrecht". Indescribable were the hardships which the brethren underwent. It was not long before the mendicant monks began to attack them, who themselves were not even keeping their own vows. Other monks there were not. The three brethren remained there for two years; then they could hold out no longer. Two of the three, together with the rector of the school they had founded

at Culm, returned to Zwolle, but not in despair. The harvest was great, they said, and the laborers few. They should send some experienced brethren together with a few students, and liberally provide them with funds. After some deliberation his request was granted. Several brethren were sent from time to time, and large sums of money. A flourishing school was founded, which in cooperation with the labors of the brethren finally resulted in the moral and intellectual uplift of a considerable part of East Prussia and Poland¹⁰³.

Great as were the difficulties which the Brethren of the Common Life had to face, the sisters were as a rule still more hardly pressed. We must never lose sight of the fact that they were living in an age when the superiority of the monastic state was almost universally recognized. As long as those disciples of Groote upon whom part of the master's spirit seemed to have descended, remained near them, they were able to hold their own. But about the year 1400 the majority of the communities were compelled to adopt the third rule of St. Francis, particularly those so far removed from the Yssel valley that they lost contact with the houses at Deventer and Zwolle¹⁰⁴. Although the Brethren and Sisters of the Common Life were not hostile to monasticism, they were always and everywhere fighting the battle of self-preservation against the various monastic orders. A great many of the noblest monks in the Low Countries, Germany, and Northern France had proceeded from the ranks of the new brotherhood, and yet the whole institution was a living protest against the decadent monasticism of the fifteenth century. Groote's brotherhood was one of the chief causes of that phase of the Reformation which in certain regions involved the disappearance of monasticism, and everywhere

in the West produced a growing desire for more personal faith, more religion in the schools, more knowledge of the Bible, a saner method of discipline, and a reaction against all manner of empty formalism, including the return to the use of the people's language, be it Dutch, German, French, or English.

IV

How did the Brethren of the Common Life usually pass their time, and what were the most characteristic features of their organization? Their constitutions, which were practically uniform in Germany, and nearly so in the Low Countries, together with a number of chronicles, treatises, and biographies, enable us to gain a fairly accurate knowledge of their daily work, habits, and ideals.

"Our house was founded", the brethren of Deventer and Zwolle wrote, "with the intention that priests and clerics might live there, supported by their own manual labor, namely, the copying of books, and the returns from certain estates; attend church with devotion, obey the prelates, wear simple clothing, preserve the canons and decrees of the saints, practise religious exercises, and lead not only irreproachable, but exemplary lives, in order that they may serve God and perchance induce others to seek salvation. Since the final end of religion consists in purity of heart, without which we shall seek perfection in vain, let it be our daily aim to purge our poisoned hearts from sin, so that in the first place we may learn to know ourselves, pass judgment upon the vices and passions of our minds, and endeavor with all our strength to eradicate them; despise temporal gain, crush selfish desires, aid others in overcoming sin, and

concentrate our energy on the acquisition of true virtues, such as humility, love, chastity, patience, and obedience. Toward this end we must direct all our spiritual exercises: prayer, meditation, reading, manual labor, watching, fasting, — in short, the harmonious development of our internal and external powers”¹⁰⁵.

“Whereas the fear of the Lord is necessary to those who wish to overcome evil, it is expedient for each of us to meditate on such subjects as induce man to fear the Lord, like sin, death, judgment, and hell. But lest continued fear might engender dejection and despair, we shall have to add more hopeful subject matter for meditation, such as the kingdom of heaven, the blessings of God, the life of Jesus Christ, and his passion. These subjects we shall arrange in such a way that on Saturdays we shall meditate on sin, Sundays on the kingdom of heaven, Mondays on death, Tuesdays on the blessings of God, Wednesdays on the final judgment, Thursdays on the pains of hell, and Fridays on the passion of Christ”¹⁰⁶.

The constitutions further state that the brethren were to rise between three and four o'clock in the morning (later shortly before five), preparing themselves at once for prayer and the reading of certain prescribed selections¹⁰⁷. All the members of the house were expected to attend the daily mass, and were exhorted to free their mind from all distractions, “thus preparing themselves, as it were, for a spiritual communion”¹⁰⁸.

Since it was considered most beneficial for all men to perform some manual labor every day, the brethren would be expected to spend several hours a day in copying religious books, or else in performing other tasks. But lest the spirit suffer from neglect, they should occasionally utter short prayers, called “ejaculations”¹⁰⁹.

The brethren were to consume their meals in silence, in order that they might pay proper attention to the reading of a selection from the Bible¹¹⁰. After supper they could do as they pleased in their own rooms till eight o'clock. At eight all guests would have to leave the house. The doors were shut fast, and silence was observed till half past eight, when they went to bed¹¹¹.

On Sundays and holidays certain passages in the Scriptures were read and explained; and in this connection there was opportunity for general discussion, when each member of the house could freely express his opinions, as long as he did not indulge in impractical disputes and argumentations. The school boys and other people were invited to attend the discussions which were held in the vernacular¹¹². The influence thus exerted upon the common people by the brethren is incalculable. For not only were there a great many among them whose fame as orators brought people long distances to hear them, but it was their combined, their continued efforts, which must have brought tangible results, considering the great number of holy days they observed. Not one of them was as famous as a Brugman, Wycliff, Hus, or Savonarola, but they formed a vast organization. Their voices were seldom heard on the streets, for they wished to avoid publicity. Nevertheless, their influence, though not always manifested visibly, reached the minds of thousands, while the books they circulated reached still larger numbers. They continued their labors in an orderly way. Like the persistent drops of water, which in the course of time even form impressions on the most solid rocks, so did the efforts of the Brethren of the Common Life affect the most perverse sinners. One could always rely on their addresses. The brethren were always ready to help the sick and comfort the afflicted. And the

school boys could always get a room in their dormitories, no matter whether they were able to pay for them or not. By avoiding notoriety and scandal, by preaching reform to all men and women without stressing unduly the faults of the clergy, the brethren labored, — unnoticed by those historians who record only the interruptions against the course of nature, against peaceful reform and bloodless revolution, thereby ignoring the great movement which throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries helped to change the medieval mind into the modern mind.

The most interesting feature about the brethren's labors as preachers was their informal addresses. On Sundays and holy days the people were accustomed to assemble in the room designated for this purpose. A chapter of the Bible was read in the people's language which contained some practical advice or instruction. Those passages in particular were selected which in very plain words taught the people how to "extinguish vice, acquire virtue, despise worldly things, and fear the Lord". Thereupon all members of the house, in so far as they were gifted by nature to act as spiritual guides of the masses, would be expected to exhort the people, either separately in their respective rooms, or in addressing the whole assembly in turns. But they were not to preach, the constitutions¹¹³ state, — merely to exhort and instruct. Confession of sins, and mutual correction were looked upon by the brethren as very helpful means of combatting evil¹¹⁴.

As time went on the Brethren of the Common Life found it necessary to appoint rectors, procurators, librarians, and several other office-holders. In the constitutions of the houses at Deventer and Zwolle the duties of the rector¹¹⁵, procurator¹¹⁶, librarian¹¹⁷, tailor¹¹⁸, and nurse¹¹⁹

were carefully outlined; several other offices were treated together in one chapter¹²⁰, though later they were more elaborately discussed in the constitutions used by the German houses, belonging to the "Colloquium of Münster"¹²¹.

The houses of the Brethren of the Common Life in the Low Countries used to send representatives to their annual meeting, called "Colloquium Zwollense". Another means of preserving discipline and unity were the annual visitations by two rectors, preferably those of Zwolle and Deventer¹²². The houses in Germany, of which the one at Münster was the chief, also were visited in the same manner¹²³. There also were held monthly meetings in each house, where divers matters relating to discipline, religious exercises, or manual labor could be discussed¹²⁴.

Each house should, if possible, have four priests and some other members of the clergy. If somebody applied for admission, the brethren were required to examine his physical condition, and his mental equipment; he should be asked from which country he had come. He would be asked, also, whether he could write, and loved to read books. In case he was found to be in good health and of sound mind and habits, he would be allowed to remain in the house for two or three months, whereupon he might be promoted to a further trial of ten or twelve months. After this lapse of time he might become a Brother of the Common Life, having first sworn before a notary public and in the presence of some witnesses that he renounced all claim to any property of his own¹²⁵. Members could be expelled in case of ill-behavior¹²⁶. The brethren were exhorted to preserve mutual love, peace, and harmony¹²⁷, and although none of them would be expected to take the vows of chastity and obedience, nevertheless they all should strive to cultivate these

virtues¹²⁸. The virtue of humility in particular was highly extolled by the brethren at Deventer and Zwolle¹²⁹. No member of the brotherhood was to have any property of his own, as it had been ceded by him to the house on being admitted as a member there. They were to spend a part of their income to meet current expenses, and the remainder for the relief of the poor¹³⁰. As for the other regulations found in the various constitutions, they need not be commented upon here¹³¹.

The Brethren and Sisters of the Common Life may well be called practical mystics, in distinction from such men as John Ruysbroeck. Love for their neighbor impelled them to work among the people in the cities. Their highest aim was the reformation of the Church, which could most effectively be done, they thought, by educating the youths of the land, and by instructing the common people in the essentials of the Christian religion. They paid much attention to their "spiritual natures", or their "inner selves". Formed in the image of God, as they believed, and assured by Christ that the kingdom of heaven is found within the human heart, they continually strove to explore their inner lives, to unite their inner selves with God or Christ, and thus regain their lost heritage¹³². They were also much given to meditation¹³³.

As Christian mystics they constantly aimed to imitate the lives of Christ, and the apostles. They loved to seek parallels between Christ's life and their own¹³⁴, for their religion was one of action, of deeds. Groote had instructed them to read the Gospels and the lives of the Church Fathers in preference to other books, as the former contained biographies¹³⁵. Paul's Epistles and the various books of the Old Testament were by no means neglected by them, however¹³⁶. As they read the Acts of the Apostles, the thought must often have struck

them that it was not at all necessary for a good Christian to seek refuge in a monastery. At any rate, their desire to win ever more souls for Christ kept them in the cities. "We have decided", the Brethren of the Common Life at Zwolle wrote in 1415, "to live in cities, in order that we may be able to give advice and instruction to clerics and other persons who wish to serve the Lord"¹³⁷. One of the most successful ways by which the brothers at Deventer won the hearts of young men, was the church drama¹³⁸. Theodore Herxen, as we saw above¹³⁹, devoted several treatises to the "art of drawing boys to God". Both the Brethren and the Sisters of the Common Life were particularly fond of finding practical lessons in the selections read from the Scriptures at their meals. These lessons they tried to remember for the purpose of applying them on specific occasions, and for the sake of mutual exhortation¹⁴⁰. Another feature of their practical mysticism was the collection of excerpts from writings perused by them. These were called "good points" or "rapiaria"¹⁴¹. Special notebooks or slips of paper were at all times kept in readiness in order to improve their knowledge¹⁴².

The Brethren and Sisters of the Common Life, in conscientiously following Christ, gloried in self-denial, poverty, humility, and obedience¹⁴³, but if we bear in mind the circumstances under which they had founded and sought to develop their institution, we may say that their outlook upon life was quite free from excessive asceticism. True, they lived very soberly: their meals were extremely simple¹⁴⁴, their clothing at first scarcely respectable¹⁴⁵. But whatever may have been their worst form of mortifying the flesh, their asceticism was of a mild nature¹⁴⁶. And as time went on, experience taught them that stinting the body does in no way enhance the

beauty of the soul, or the dignity of the spirit. Consequently, we find that after the year 1400 they dressed more properly¹⁴⁷, used more wholesome meals¹⁴⁸, reduced the number of hours devoted to copying books¹⁴⁹, took more exercises in the open air¹⁵⁰, lived less estranged from "worldly" people¹⁵¹, and also acquired more respect for learning as a final end¹⁵².

V

It has often been asserted by scholars of late that the Brethren of the Common Life paid little or no attention to education¹⁵³. On the other hand one also frequently reads statements to the effect that they even made their living by teaching¹⁵⁴. Once again the sources should be consulted, rather than the conflicting opinions of modern scholars. In the first place, then, let it be understood that the brothers at Deventer never had a real school of their own there, nor did any of their members teach in the cathedral school of that city until several years after the death of Radewijns¹⁵⁵. There were two schools at Deventer during the days of Groote and Radewijns¹⁵⁶. From 1378 till 1381 they were both supervised by William Vroede, Groote's friend, who upon Groote's advice brought about certain reforms in these two schools¹⁵⁷. As rector of the cathedral school he was succeeded by John Lubberts (1381-1385)¹⁵⁸, and not by Florentius Radewijns, as some writers believe.

At Zwolle John Cele was rector of the city school from 1375 till 1417¹⁵⁹. His educational labors, which were imitated at Deventer, together with the assistance freely accorded to the school boys by the Brethren of the Common Life and the other disciples of Groote at Deventer and Zwolle, were causes which made the schools

of Zwolle and Deventer famous long before the days of Hegius. It will be remembered that under the administration of Cele the attendance at the school at Zwolle rose to 1200. The hearty welcome extended by those pious matrons and the kind-hearted brethren must have acted as a very powerful magnet for the boys who had come from Poland, the interior of Germany, the upper Rhine valley, and the distant shores of Flanders, where on their return they extended the influence of the school. The brothers themselves received their interest in education from Groote and Cele. Groote had always laid stress on the importance of offering a better education to future pastors. Hence his friendship with the teachers at Deventer and Zwolle. The brethren, in inheriting most of Groote's ideals, soon shared his views on the need of a better education, particularly for those boys who intended some day to join the ranks of the clergy. Groote's chief aim had been the reform of the Church; the surest and quickest way to reach that happy end in his opinion was the training of young men. This training should by no means exclude the study of literature, pagan or classic as well as Christian; while grammar, rhetoric, logic, mathematics, and philosophy were to retain their places in the curriculum. Cele materialized Groote's plans at Zwolle, aided as he was by the brethren in that city. Not long after his death the reform inaugurated by him spread to Deventer and many other places where Groote's disciples had founded brethren-houses.

At Amersfoort the brethren never had a school of their own, and for more than a century after the foundation of their home, none of them seem to have taught in that city. We find, however, that in 1529 one of the brothers was forbidden to teach school by the city council, at least until the quarrel between him and the rector of

the city school was settled. During the years 1530 and 1531 the magistrates were trying to secure a new rector for their school, and asked the brothers to pay his salary, "as had been the custom before"¹⁶⁰. The brethren, therefore, appear to have been interested in the local school. At Cassel they taught school in their own house¹⁶¹. At Culm the brethren, as was indicated above¹⁶², founded a splendid new school, which helped to introduce the best fruits of Western education into East Prussia and Poland. At Delft twelve poor boys were usually provided by the brethren with food, clothing, and lodging. Whereas during the first period of their history in Delft they sent these boys to the public school for instruction¹⁶³, later on the latter were taught by the brethren themselves¹⁶⁴. A boarding school was founded at Doesburg¹⁶⁵, while at Gouda¹⁶⁶, Ghent¹⁶⁷, and Grammont¹⁶⁸ they had schools of their own, as well as at Groningen¹⁶⁹, 's-Hertogenbosch¹⁷⁰, Liège¹⁷¹, Magdeburg¹⁷², Marburg¹⁷³, Nijmegen¹⁷⁴, Rostock¹⁷⁵, and Utrecht¹⁷⁶. At Mechlin they formed part of the local school-board¹⁷⁷. Doubtless the brethren in other cities conducted a like work¹⁷⁸.

The most important schools were found at Deventer, Zwolle, and Münster, where also the most influential brethren-houses had been established. A complete proof of the excellence of these schools was given by John Sturm, the celebrated rector at Strasbourg, when he outlined the plans of his "gymnasium" to the magistrates of the Alsatian metropolis¹⁷⁹. He did not recommend the schools of Cologne, of Louvain, and of Trier, and preferred Deventer to Utrecht. Nor was Sturm the only teacher who acknowledged the debt he owed to Cele's followers, as will be seen later.

John Cele was succeeded as rector of the town school at Zwolle by Livinius of Middelburg, one of Groote's

followers¹⁸⁰, and he in turn by Herman Kerstken¹⁸¹. About the year 1432 John van Dalen was appointed rector¹⁸²; he helped to usher in a second period of prosperity enjoyed by the public school at Zwolle, aided as he was by the Brethren of the Common Life¹⁸³. Again several hundred boys came flocking to Zwolle from all directions¹⁸⁴. Several buildings had to be erected by the brothers to lodge them, but even these did not suffice. Many kind mothers were induced to open their doors to one or more of them. Their own mothers and aunts had done so in the days of John Cele, when they themselves had often asked where all those strangers had come from; and many a pious father had once gone to that same school, where he had been taught so well that for many years the maxims of Zwolle's learned teacher were upon his lips, when friends of his youth would come to visit him¹⁸⁵!

It is no wonder that among all those boys at least a few great minds were found. And where Groote's ideas were acted upon with so much tender devotion, where so much love was lavished upon responsive hearts, and such ideals were expounded as the "Imitation of Christ" contained, the school at Zwolle could not fail to send out once more a host of religious youths. The names of most of these boys have been lost to memory, and of the others only a few can be mentioned here. Naturally one turns first to him who became the most famous educator in Transalpine Europe, — to Alexander Hegius.

Hegius was born near the village of Heek in Westphalia in 1433¹⁸⁶. He was teacher at Wesel in 1474, and from 1475–1483 taught school at Emmerich¹⁸⁷, no doubt supported in the usual way by Brethren of the Common Life, who had a house in each of these two places, while at Emmerich they had founded two dormitories for the

pupils of the local school¹⁸⁸. In 1483 Hegius was appointed rector of the school attached to St. Lebwin's at Deventer¹⁸⁹, where he remained until his death in 1498¹⁹⁰. When teaching school at Emmerich he had become acquainted with Agricola, of whom he learned Greek¹⁹¹. Gansfort also was an intimate friend of his, as appears from one of his letters¹⁹². Anxious to promote the study of the classics, he encouraged his pupils to learn both Latin and Greek. He himself had been taught Greek too late to master that language so well as some of his contemporaries¹⁹³. But he was always eager to learn more, and diligently read the classics and the Fathers¹⁹⁴.

Alexander Hegius, though he may be called one of the leading humanists of the late fifteenth century, as he showed a great interest in the study of the Ancients, was nevertheless too closely associated with the Brethren of the Common Life to despise the use of the vernacular, as so many scholars of his time were doing¹⁹⁵. As poet, he became the forerunner of the "younger humanists", and, although he lacked real poetic enthusiasm, his labors in this direction are nevertheless of historical significance¹⁹⁶.

His school at Deventer grew to 2200 pupils. This was due in part to the assistance given him by the brethren. At Zwolle he had been instructed in what might be called the rudiments of Christian education. The ideals of the Christian Renaissance were never opposed to art or learning, as many a manuscript will show us to-day, written and illuminated as they were by the Augustinian Canons Regular and the Brethren of the Common Life. Before Hegius began the study of Greek, he had managed to attract fifteen hundred pupils to his school at Emmerich. In 1475 he was not yet a humanist in the proper sense of the word. Still his fame had reached the cities

of Trier, Cologne, Strasbourg, Liège, Magdeburg, and other centres of learning. His love of poetry, of the Greek language, and of ancient letters in general were not the causes of his early fame. The secret of his success lay deeper than that. It was the favorable circumstances attending the presence of the brothers at Wesel and Emmerich, Hegius' early instruction at Zwolle, and the peculiar bent of his nature which enabled him to become Cele's truest successor. Hegius was not a Petrarch nor a wandering humanist like Agricola or Hermann von dem Busche, to name some of the best types of the true humanists, but he was the greatest educator of Transalpine Europe in the fifteenth century, and the marvelous success he enjoyed as teacher from 1474 till 1498 he owed mainly to the work of two men: Gerard Groote, founder of the Brethren of the Common Life, and John Cele, who inaugurated, upon Groote's advice, the reform which turned into the revival of learning in Northern Europe. This revival till 1455 developed wholly independently of the Italian Renaissance and later added the best thoughts of the classics, in so far as they were discovered by Italian humanists, to its great storehouse of medieval learning. Hegius, in continuing Cele's work, advocated a reform in the text-books. The "Medulla" was not worth being read any longer, he said¹⁹⁷. On the last page of his "Invectiva" he gives a list of grammars which should be altered. Throughout this whole essay, in fact, he indicates the need of better text-books. As for style, he asserted in his "Farrago" that one should appropriate the diction of Cicero, Virgil, and Sallust, and imitate the Italian humanists. The "Disciplina Scholarium", the "Gemma Gemmarum", and the Lexica of Hugutio Brito and John Januensis, should be cast aside as no longer worthy of study¹⁹⁸. Here he

does not speak as a true medievalist, but appears to have absorbed some of the ideas of the Italian Renaissance.

A striking portrait of Hegius was drawn by Butzbach, one of his last pupils¹⁹⁹. It shows him not only a scholar and teacher. As a true child of the "New Devotion", he directed much of his attention to the relief of the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, a practice in which he differed from humanists of the Italian type. When death claimed him²⁰⁰, he was followed to the grave by a mourning crowd of grateful men, women, and children, who loved and revered him. All his possessions he had spent in "helping to extend God's kingdom on earth"²⁰². Other humanists have received greater praise from Erasmus and others²⁰³, but where some of his contemporaries were greater scholars, his influence upon the several thousand pupils sent out by him to reform the Church in the Low Countries, Germany, and France, was greater than that of a mere scholar. For instance, Agricola and Mutian Rufus did not leave thousands of students behind who eagerly and unitedly carried out their plans for reform in school, church, and monastery. They were not constructive, though great critics. Butzbach rightly pointed out the difference between the thorough reform instituted by Hegius and the ineffective work of the shifting, homeless humanists of the Erfurt type. "Nowadays", he says, "one only has to give presents in order to get a degree. Knowledge is no longer the first essential"²⁰⁴.

It was easy enough for the wandering Bohemians of learning in the early sixteenth century to poke fun at existing conditions. All negative criticism is easy. When it came to actual reform, however, it was the school at Deventer which furnished the required missionaries. Thus it had been in the early years of the fifteenth cen-

tury, and so it remained throughout the whole life-time of Hegius. The priors were always glad to get recruits from Deventer²⁰⁵. While certain contemporaries of his, like the celebrated Anton Vrye, or Liber, were soon forgotten after their death, Hegius continued to be a living force in the hamlets and cities of the Yssel valley and beyond²⁰⁶.

During the rectorate of Hegius, then, Deventer was one of the chief centres of the movement usually referred to as the German Renaissance. The best thoughts of the Italian Renaissance were absorbed at Deventer and Zwolle, and from there they entered Germany, now transformed by the "New Devotion", or Christian Renaissance, which had now become an intellectual movement, though its chief aim remained the restoration of the Church in all its members²⁰⁷. An index of how strong an intellectual movement this was, is the fact that many classics were issued from the presses at Deventer before 1500: more than four hundred and fifty works²⁰⁸.

One of the best known humanists of the Yssel valley type was Ortwin Gratius, a man of great learning, and sound judgment. Few of his contemporaries were such warm advocates of the revival of ancient learning as he; not many equalled his scholarly equipment; his poems were unusually fine, his Latin quite praiseworthy. Few men have ever been so shamefully and so unjustly attacked as he, not only by his contemporaries but also by later writers. The investigations of three modern historians, however, have vindicated his claim to the title of Christian humanist, scholar, poet, and educator²⁰⁹.

Much might be written about other pupils of the Brethren of the Common Life, some of whom taught school while they were members of the celebrated brotherhood. Thus the schools at Deventer and Zwolle not only

served as a means of improving intellectual standards among the clergy, but offered preparatory courses for students intending to enter the universities, and also sent out a great number of teachers to other cities. So great was their number that in the Netherlands scarcely a school could be found during the opening years of the sixteenth century, where there was not felt at least some connection with the Yssel valley "gymnasia"²¹⁰. In Germany at that time, and throughout the preceding century, if one were to study the origins of each of the early secondary schools throughout the North and West, he would undoubtedly be able to trace the influence of Deventer and Zwolle. Mention can only be made here of the two chief centres of the German Renaissance, that is, the two schools which contributed most largely to the dissemination of learning in Germany from 1450 till 1520, — the schools of Schlettstadt and Münster.

For several centuries Strasbourg had been the ecclesiastical and intellectual metropolis of Alsace. With Trier, Cologne, Liège, Aachen, and Utrecht it had possessed a sort of educational monopoly in the regions which once had separated Germany from France. But conditions did not always remain thus. Cologne and Trier began to send their most promising sons to little Zwolle, which was only an insignificant parish in the diocese of Utrecht, but the town of Cele's school. It was not long before Alsace developed a similar situation.

A Westphalian teacher, named Louis Dringenberg, who had been trained at Deventer²¹¹, came to Schlettstadt in 1441. Here, for a period of 36 years, he was rector of the public or town school²¹². There were no Brethren of the Common Life in Schlettstadt, which may account for the fact that he was unable to draw such vast numbers of pupils to his school as Cele had done to

Zwolle, but this school at Schlettstadt eventually surpassed that at Strasbourg. The reason was given by Charles Schmidt, the author of the "*Histoire littéraire de l'Alsace*": "While thus Strasbourg and most other cities lagged behind, Schlettstadt already possessed a flourishing school. Founded about the middle of the fifteenth century and supervised by the magistrates, its rector was the Westphalian Louis Dringenberg, who had carried hither the spirit and method of the Brethren of the Common Life"²¹³. More to the point is the following statement by G. C. Knod, another Alsatian scholar of note: "This spirit of pedagogical skill and pious wisdom, as it prevailed in the schools of the Brethren of the Common Life, had also asserted itself in the town school of Schlettstadt. It was the first school conducted by laymen in South-German regions which, in conscious deviation from the clerical institutions, outlined its scope and method after the humanistic fashion"²¹⁴.

In several cities the Brethren of the Common Life had schools of their own, as at Rostock, Ghent, Liège, and Utrecht, while in almost every city where they had a house, one or more of the members of the brotherhood became school teachers, particularly after the year 1450, when, as time went on, the printed type made it unnecessary for them to continue their work as copyists. If one takes these facts into consideration, one can form a better opinion of the way in which Dringenberg brought this new "pedagogical spirit of the Brethren of the Common Life" from Deventer to Schlettstadt. He doubtless adopted much of the course he had followed at Deventer, where the teachers used Cele's method of combining sound religious instruction with a well-selected list of studies, took due care of the pupils' individual needs, preferred kind warnings to harsh punishment,

sought to inculcate a love for individual research by letting pupils delve among the classics rather than confine themselves to text-books, and taught the boys the use of their vernacular as well. This method Dringenberg introduced at Schlettstadt. His successors continued his method in general²¹⁵⁻²²⁰.

At Münster the Brethren of the Common Life founded a house as early as the year 1400²²¹. They did not found a school at that time, but aroused an interest in learning, which was very great during the second half of the fifteenth century²²²⁻²²³. This fact has been established by the research of Dr. Bömer, the librarian of the university at Münster²²⁴. Münster in the fifteenth century became the great gate-way through which the religious and educational reforms of Groote's followers entered Germany, passing Almelo, Frenswegen, Schüttorf, and Coesveld to Münster, and beyond, to Rostock, Hildesheim, Magdeburg, and even to Cologne and the Upper Rhine valley²²⁵.

Now it happened, as we saw, that both at Zwolle and at Deventer the schools were reformed and rendered famous mostly by men who were connected with the brotherhood. At Münster, when eventually the cathedral school was reformed, it was by Rudolph von Langen, who had attended school at Zwolle with Alexander Hegius.

Impressed by the fame of Deventer's school, Von Langen believed that the school of the ancient and celebrated cathedral of his own city should at least equal St. Lebwin's at Deventer in luster. To secure a good rector, it has been said that he asked his old friend Hegius to come, but the sources leave the question undecided²²⁶. Von Langen appointed Timan Kemener, a pupil of Hegius²²⁷, and in the year 1500 a thorough-going reform

of Münster's cathedral school began. His successor, John Murmellius, a native of Roermond, continued the work of educational reform. He had studied at Deventer and Cologne²²⁸, and in 1500 we find him teaching school at Münster under the direction of Timan Kemener. In the cathedral school at Münster he taught till 1507, in the school of St. Martin, from 1507 till 1512, and from 1512 till 1513 again in the cathedral school²²⁹.

Few men so faithfully followed the policy outlined by Gerard Groote, and first practised by John Cele at Zwolle, Hegius at Emmerich and Deventer, and Dringenberg at Schlettstadt, as Murmellius. He cared little for mere style and mere eloquence. Education would be a complete failure, he taught, if one concentrated all his energy on oratory and style²³⁰. He freely criticized the lives of bad priests and monks²³¹, as Groote also had done, and in his attack on the decadent forms of scholasticism so prevalent in his day, he simply repeated what Groote had said. He did not direct his assaults against philosophy, but against empty phrases, devoid of practical contents. To roam about the continent in search of fame and honor, as many mere humanists were doing, was a vocation not suited to his character. Not the love of self, he said, but the glory and honor of God should be the final aim of all instruction; all knowledge was useless without the acquisition of virtue²³². Whereas many leaders of the Italian Renaissance studied the classics for style only, the men of Deventer, Zwolle, Schlettstadt, and Münster delved into the same mine and found there fine phrases, but greater treasures in wisdom. When they wrote, they proved themselves good stylists too. Murmellius, though he died at thirty-seven, published fifty works in fifteen years, some of which were wonderful store-houses of pedagogical, literary, philosophical, and

historical value²³³. Considering his distinguished career as a teacher, it is astonishing how he contrived to produce so much. His text-books were popular in Germany for several generations; one of them passed through seventy-seven editions, and was used in the schools till 1800²³⁴. His "Pappa Puerorum" was published thirty-two times in less than sixty years. In editing both classic and Christian writers he became a mighty force in the realm of revived learning²³⁵. In laying proper stress on physical and moral improvement, on grammatical constructions, the proper study of art and literature, he aimed at that harmonious development of character which was possessed by the Greeks of old²³⁶. His commentary on Boethius shows how well he was acquainted with the classics. One remarkable feature about his works is the simple, clear style, the absence of pompous expressions. Better than most scholars of his time he knew how to compress brilliant thoughts into brief sentences²³⁷, — a rare quality in a humanist of the early sixteenth century. And though he indulged in the use of satire, as was usual at that time, his language remained remarkably free from revengeful or spiteful sarcasm²³⁸, as was unusual.

Murmellius was assisted and followed at Münster by other noteworthy teachers, such as John Pering, a former pupil of Hegius; Joseph Horlenius, a pupil of Pering; and Jacob Montanus, later a member of the Brethren of the Common Life at Herford, and a friend of Luther²³⁹.

The fact is, Münster and Deventer sent out so vast a host of really great scholars and teachers that it is quite impossible to enumerate them. Under their leadership practically all the larger schools in Western Germany were reorganized and reformed. Through them the benevolent influence of Cele's work found its way into many a city where no Brethren of the Common Life

were found, such as Attendorn, Dortmund, Düsseldorf, Eisleben, Essen, Lübeck, Lüneburg, and Minden²⁴⁰. And as the pupils of these teachers in their turn continued Cele's work, the literary productions and the educational reforms of Groote's followers were diffused throughout the land, entering shop and farm-house, chapel and monastery, kitchen and workshop, appealing to the hearts of high and low, of rich and poor, of old and young. Who can culculate or describe the influence which thus radiated from the Yssel valley schools in all directions? Such influence never dies, and readers must have been impressed by the fact that modern education perpetuates the best features of the reformed education of Groote, and Cele, and the Brethren of the Common Life.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. The Grebbe is a small river to the west of the Veluwe.
2. W. L. Bouwmeester, *De ontwikkeling van Nederlands landschappen*, The Hague 1911, p. 334.
3. Ch. Petit-Dutaillis, Charles VII, Louis XI et les premières années de Charles VIII (1422-1492), in: E. Lavissee, *Histoire de France*, vol. IV², Paris 1902, pp. 115, 147.
4. W. Denton, *England in the fifteenth century*, London 1888, pp. 118-123.
5. K. Lamprecht, *Deutsche Geschichte*, vol. IV, Berlin 1896, pp. 435-488.
6. H. Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, vol. I, Brussels 1902, pp. VIII-IX, 27, 30, 32, 156-158, 161-169, 244-245; vol. II, Brussels 1903, pp. 178-180, 380-383, 394-395.
7. H. Pirenne, *Hist. de Belgique*, vol. I, pp. 326-327, 336. — K. Lamprecht, *Deutsche Geschichte*, vol. III, Berlin 1895, pp. 310-312.
8. H. Pirenne, *Hist. de Belgique*, vol. I, pp. 156-161.
9. Ch. Petit-Dutaillis, l. c., p. 170: "La cour la plus brillante de l'Europe, au milieu du XVe siècle, était celle de Phillippe le Bon, duc de Bourgogne. Aucune région en effet n'était aussi riche que les Pays-Bas, qui lui appartenaient, et Phillippe était le plus prodigue des hommes. Il passa son règne dans un long éblouissement. Sa cour, comme plus tard celle des rois de France, fut le rendez-vous des seigneurs de ses immenses domaines; ils imitaient ses vices et dissipaient leur patrimoine en dépenses extravagantes. Sa cour fut vraiment une préfiguration de la cour de Versailles. Tout y était réglé pour relever la majesté du prince. C'est là que fut inventée ou tout au moins développée l'étiquette des monarchies chrétiennes".
10. H. Pirenne, *Hist. de Belgique*, vol. III, pp. 266-267.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. In the biographies and other sources I have used, his name appears as Gerardus Magnus, Gerardus Groot, Gerardus Groet, Gerardus Groit, Gheryt (de) Grote, Gherit (de) Groete, Gherd or Gheerd (de) Groote, etc. I have decided to call him Groote instead of De Groote, simply because he is better known by that name. In the documents his name usually appears as De Groote, but most manuscripts have the name Groot, Groet, or Groit without the article, and nearly all modern writers have called him Groote, and not De Groote.

2. J. Badius Ascensius, *Vita Thomae Malleoli a Campis*, ch. VIII, based on: Th. à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. XVIII, § 4.

3. J. de Hullu, *De statuten van het Meester-Geertshuis te Deventer*, p. 74. — R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 11.

4. J. de Hullu, *De statuten van het Meester-Geertshuis*, p. 74.

5. P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, pp. 333-334.

6. H. Denifle, *Cartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. III, pp. 92-93. — R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, pp. 1-2.

7. P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, pp. 355-356.

8. H. Denifle, *Cartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. III, p. 92, note 31.

9. J. Badius Ascensius, *Vita Thom. Malleoli*, ch. VIII.

10. P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, p. 334.

11. J. D. Van Doornink, *Kamerrekeningen van Deventer*, vol. III, part 1, nos. 339, 541, 615, 625, 636.

12. One at Aachen (see: G. Dumber, *Kerkelyk en wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, p. 548. — R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 3), and one at Utrecht (see: R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 3. — Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. II, § 2).

13. Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. XI, § 7. — R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 2. — P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, p. 333.

14. Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. III, § 2.

15. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 2.

16. Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. IV, § 2. — R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 3.

17. J. G. R. Acquoy, *Gerardi Magni epistolae* XIV, p. 62.
18. G. Dumbar, *Kerkelyk en Wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, pp. 507-510, 549-550. — J. de Hullu, *De statuten van het Meester-Geertshuis te Deventer*, pp. 63, 75. — J. G. R. Acquoy, *Gerardi Magni epistolae* XIV, p. 63.
19. J. de Hullu, *De statuten van het Meester-Geertshuis*, p. 71.
20. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 5.
21. W. Moll, *Kerkgeschiedenis van Nederland vóór de Hervorming*, vol. II, part II, pp. 119-120. — J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het Klooster te Windesheim*, vol. I, pp. 27-28.
22. Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. VII, § 1-2. See also: ch. VI, § 1 of this same work, and D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographiëen van beroemde mannen uit den Deventer-kring* (1901), p. 413.
23. The following works may be recommended for a study of the life and writings of this remarkable mystic: J. v. Ruusbroec, *Werken*, ed. J. B. David, Ghent 1856-1869. — J. Ruysbroeck, *Alle de werken in nieuwere taal overgezet*, ed. H. W. E. Moller, Bussum 1914. — Henricus ex Pomerio (Bogaerts), *De origine monasterii Viridis Vallis et de gestis patrum et fratrum in primordiali fervore ibidem degentium*, in: *Analecta Bollandia*, vol. IV, pp. 263-333, and in particular: pp. 283-308. — A. A. van Otterloo, *Johannes Ruysbroeck*, Amsterdam 1874, The Hague 1896. — W. de Vreese, *Het leven en de werken van Jan van Ruusbroec*, Ghent 1895-1896. — A. Auger, *Étude sur les mystiques des Pays-Bas au Moyen-Age*, in: *Mémoires couronnés et autres mémoires de l'Acad. Royale de Belgique*, Brussels 1902, pp. 157-264. — The best work in English is: E. Underhill, *Ruysbroeck*, London 1915.
24. H. Pomerius, *De origine monasterii Viridis Vallis*, p. 289.
25. A. Auger, *Étude sur les mystiques des Pays-Bas au Moyen-Age*, p. 171. Cele did not commence his teaching career in 1377, but about the year 1374. See: M. Schoengen, *Jacobus Traiecti alias de Voecht narratio de inchoatione domus clericorum in Zwollis*, p. 6, note 3.
26. Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. VIII, § 1.
27. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 5.
28. M. Schoengen, *Jacobus Traiecti alias de Voecht narratio*, p. 5, note 2. Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. XV, § 1. — Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Florentii*, ch. VI, § 2. — J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, p. 252.

29. Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. VIII, § 2; ch. XV, § 1.

30. J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, p. 252. — D. A. Brinkerink, *Vita venerabilis Ioannis Brinckerinck*, p. 259. — Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. XV, § 1. — Thomas à Kempis, *Chronicon canonicorum regularium Montis Sanctae Agnetis*, ch. I. — Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. VI, § 1. — P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, pp. 341-342.

31. Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. XV, § 1.

32. The sermon preached by Groote on that day has been preserved in several manuscripts; it was called *Sermo contra Focaristas*, and has been printed by A. Clarisse and his son J. Clarisse, in: *Archief voor Nederlandsche Kerkgeschiedenis*, vol. I, Leiden 1829, pp. 364-379; vol. II, Leiden 1830, pp. 307-395; vol. VIII, Leiden 1837, pp. 5-107. For the date when this sermon was preached see: A. and J. Clarisse, *Over den geest en de denkwijze van Geert Groete*, in: *Archief voor Ned. Kerkgesch.*, vol. I, p. 385, note 6. As for its celebrity see: K. Grube, *Gerhard Groote und seine Stiftungen*, pp. 35, 96.

33. D. A. Brinkerink, *De vita venerabilis Ioannis Brinckerinck*, p. 324. — D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën van beroemde mannen uit den Deventer-kring*, 1901, p. 417. — Frensweger manuscript, p. 7.

34. P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, p. 342: "*Fecit igitur egregius iste predicator signa et prodigia magna in populo, non autem in despicabili et mortifera carne, sed revera in ipsius interioris hominis adorande Trinitatis ymagine, videlicet mortuos suscitando*". — Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Florentii*, ch. VI, § 1: "*Vita vox magistri praedicantis tanto fortius valuit in cordibus audientium, quanto perfectius caeteros praeibat in via virtutum*". Many examples of conversions are related by the biographers. See: W. J. Kühler, *Johannes Brinckerinck en zijn klooster te Diepenveen*, pp. 135-136.

35. D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën van beroemde mannen uit den Deventer-kring*, 1902, p. 24. — D. A. Brinkerink, *De vita venerabilis Ioannis Brinckerinck*, p. 324.

36. Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Florentii*, ch. XI, § 1. — D. A. Brinkerink, *Vita venerabilis Ioannis Brinckerinck*, p. 324.

37. Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. XI, § 1. The church of St. Lebwin at Deventer was named after Lebwin, an English missionary who had tried to convert the Saxons and Frisians

north and east of the Yssel. For the history of this church see: G. Dumber, *Kerkelyk en Wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, pp. 235-441.

38. D. A. Brinkerink, *Vita venerabilis Ioannis Brinckerinck*, p. 324.

39. One of the men who accompanied Groote as a rule was John Brinckerinck; see p. 87.

40. D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën van beroemde mannen uit den Deventer-kring*, 1902, p. 24.

41. See p. 44.

42. See p. 13.

43. Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. VIII, § 3. — D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1901, p. 417. — P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, p. 348. The edict was promulgated between August and October 21, 1383; see: W. J. Kühler, *De prediking van Geert Groote*, p. 224.

44. D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1901, p. 417. A letter by William de Salvarvilla to Pope Urban VI, asking for a license from the pope for Groote is found in the Opera of Thomas à Kempis, behind the *Vita Gerardi Magni*. This letter was written on the 21st of October, 1383.

45. D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1901, p. 417. — Th. à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. IX, § 2. — M. Schoengen, *Jacobus Traiecti alias de Voecht narratio*, p. 15, note 1.

46. D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1901, p. 418.

47. M. Schoengen, *Jacobus Traiecti alias de Voecht narratio*, pp. 6, 17. — J. H. Gerretsen, *Florentius Radewijns*, p. 66, note 3.

48. He translated the seven penitential psalms (Psalm 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143), and 63 other psalms. See: R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 6. — P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, p. 349. — W. Moll, *Geert Groote's dietsche vertalingen*, pp. 2-77, 107-112, 113-148, 149-180, 181-220. For the glosses see: W. Moll, *Geert Groote's dietsche vertalingen*, pp. 42-44, 55-59, 62-67.

49. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 10. — Th. à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. XVI, § 4. For the history of his bones see: G. Dumber, *Kerkelyk en Wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, pp. 507-510. — J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. I, p. 57.

50. See: Appendix A.

51. E. Underhill, *Ruysbroeck*, pp. 66-67, 184, 88.

52. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. W. Preger, p. 30: "Venerabilibus patris meis et dominis universaliter intime commendari intimius

desidero, precipue capitibus prepositi et priori [Ruysbroeck], cuius scabellum pedum tam in hac vita quam in futura, quia sibi anima mea pre cunctis mortalibus amore et reverencia conglutinata est, fieri concupisco".

53. *Ibid.*, p. 30, p. 51.

54. See: J. H. Gerretsen, Florentius Radewijns, pp. 1-42.

55. G. Groote, *Sermo de nativitate Domini*, fol. 122^b-123^a.

56. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 171: Adam, undique bene formatus divinis manibus, suasu mulieris, cum toto genere humano cecidit.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 181: "Inde namque omnes malitiae cupiditatum nostrarum originem sumunt, quia supremae rationi sensitivae vires ea caro non obediunt. Quae ei ideo non obediunt, quia ipsa ratio Deo non obedit nec subjicitur". See also p. 161 and p. 233 of this same treatise.

59. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, p. 13: "Et ante et post ibidem pulcerrime probat [Bernard in the seventh epistle to Adam Monachus], nec Papam posse dare licentiam, ut scandala fiant; et si Papa praeceperit, vel licentiaverit, illicite sibi quis obedit".

60. *Ibid.*, p. 65: "Rursus inde est, quod quidam adeo magnificent Ecclesiae judicia et ab ipsa judicanda, quia sunt notiora eis quam Dei mandata, vel praecepta divina aut jura naturae, propter cordis tenebras nescientes vim legum et institutionum Ecclesiasticarum". — *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 207: "Imo et homo interior non in propriam, nec in Dei imaginem, sed in bestiam et diabolicum monstrum transformatur".

61. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. J. G. R. Acquoy, p. 91.

62. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. G. Bonet-Maury, p. 99: "Quam fraternitatem si relinqueremus, necesse esset principem relinquere et divinum exemplare. Quem in secreto animo, in interiore homine, divinos complexus noscendo, concepimus". — *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 181: "Omnis ergo tentationis diabolicae et traditionis Satanae et cujuslibet cupiditatis origo est delicto supremae rationis, Dei capaxis, sed se Deo non unientis, Deum cognoscere non curantis". — P. 193: "Nam resistentia est in suprema ratione, ubi major hominis consistit libertas, quam in inferiore sensitiva, in qua est concupiscentia carnalis, cui saepe, sive velit, sive nolit, in suo objecto delectabili complacet".

63. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. G. Bonet-Maury, p. 99.

64. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 108: "Nam ignorantia illa est Legis Dei et naturalis, et conscientiae propriae, et lapsus humani, et est ex neglecta sui ipsius custodia et notitia. Ex quibus ignoratis et neglectis omnia mala oriuntur et sequuntur; nam omnis contumelia filiae Diaboli, sicut gloria filiae Regis, ab intus est. Qui intus se non custodit, exterius vane laborat".

65. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. X de Ram, p. 94.

66. G. Groote, *Sermo de paupertate*, p. 438: "O efficaciae paupertatis dies, que est dies spiritualis Iherusalem, interne visionis et pacis! O dies aggressus Domini in templum suum vivum!".

67. D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1901, p. 419: "My invloeyen alsoe vele verborgen synne uytten psalmen, die mij inwert trecken, alsoe dat ic gene zwaerheit en voele in den leesen, mer ic heb der grote gnoechte in".

68. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. G. Bonet-Maury, p. 100: "Cave ne Deum derelinquas. Si ipsum reliqueris, qui omne bonum est ipse, quid restabit tibi nisi omne malum?"

69. G. Groote, *De locatione ecclesiarum*, p. 130: "Regimen animarum mundat conscientiam et aperit homini Ecclesiam triumphantem et coelum, et unit hominem corpori Christi mystico". See p. 34, note 140.

70. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. XII, §§ 4, 13.

71. R. Rier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, pp. 6-7. — W. J. Kühler, *Johannes Brinckerinck*, p. 184.

72. P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, p. 365: "Omnes lectiones, quas didicistis, reputabuntur vobis sicut oracio dominicalis propter piam intencionem, quam ad Deum in studendo habuistis". See also: G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, pp. 83-84.

73. P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, p. 358.

74. G. Groote, *Sermo de nativitate Christi*, fol. 109^{a-b}: "Ut finis precepti et omnis exercitacionis nostre caritas sit et fiat de corde puriori, consciencia meliori et fide minus ficta, ut quia simus quasi os Domini, preciosum secundum prophetam a vili separentes"; fol. 117^b: "Quod si sic non est caritas de corde puro et fide non ficta que finis est precepti". — *Epistolae*, ed. X de Ram, p. 109. — J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, p. 264.

75. G. Bonet-Maury, *Gérard de Groote*, p. 96.

76. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, p. 97:

"Vicesimum quintum dictum meum est, quod adhuc exeundum et recedendum est ab omni amicitia carnali et mundana omnium carnaliter et seculariter viventium".

77. Ibid., p. 100: "Verum omnes etiam, tam malos quam bonos, spiritualiter amare debemus et spirituali jungi amicitia, et, si necesse vel congruum fuerit, etiam societate corporali conjungi; maxime, si fortes fuerimus, ne, si debiles sumus, cum alios ad nos spiritualiter trahere nitimur, nos ipsos carnaliter tractos sentiamus.

78. Th. à Kempis, Vita Gerardi Magni, ch. XIV.

79. Ibid., ch. XII, § 1.

80. G. Groote, Epistolae, ed. X de Ram, p. 81.

81. G. Groote, Epistolae, ed. X. de Ram, p. 73: "Ante omnia videtur mihi vobis congruum, ut sitis laetus spiritualiter; nam tristitia et pusillanimitas et solitudo, si ad multum veniunt, melancolicum faciunt". — P. 90: "Tristitia, quae nocet cordi...".

82. Th. à Kempis, Vita Gerardi Magni, ch. XVIII, § 10.

83. Ibid., ch. XI, §§ 1-2.

84. Ibid., ch. XVIII, § 8.

85. G. Groote, Prologue to his translation of certain church hymns, in: W. Moll, Geert Groote's Dietsche vertalingen, p. 53: "Want die woerde sijn ende dienen omme die sinne, ende die sinne niet omme die woerde".

86. G. Groote, Epistolae, ed. W. Preger, p. 33; ed. X. de Ram, p. 74.

87. See pp. 47-48, 63-65.

88. G. Groote, Epistolae, ed. X. de Ram, p. 87. — Sermo de nativ. Domini, fol. 108^{a-b}.

89. G. Groote, De Simonia, p. 5.

90. G. Groote, Epistolae, ed. J. G. R. Acquoy, pp. 77-78.

91. G. Groote, De Simonia, p. 30.

92. The Horologium was written by Suso, a German mystic.

93. G. Groote, De Simonia, pp. 32-33.

94. W. Moll, Geert Groote's sermoen over de vrijwillige armoede, p. 430: "Dat hij om dergelijke reden ook ongezind was monnik te worden, meen ik voor zeker te moeten aannemen".

95. G. Groote, Epistolae, ed. X. de Ram, pp. 91-92: "In nomine Domini ingredi monasterium hoc ea intentione et proposito tanquam in eo eligens et assumens totius tuae vitae statum Deo magis beneplacitum et meliorem et securiorem inter omnes status, quos in hac vita invenire potes, qui tibi de

praesenti possunt contingere". For other examples, where Groote advises some of his followers to enter a monastery, see: J. G. R. Acquoy, *Gerardi Magni Epistolae XIV.*, p. 77.

96. G. Groote, *Raadgevingen aan eene Kluizenaarster*, pp. 434-437.

97. For eight other examples see: G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. J. G. R. Acquoy, p. 77.

98. See p. 22. — G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. J. G. R. Acquoy, p. 77: "Etiam, secundum meum videre, non auderem vobis consulere quod intraretis religionem, licet non confidam nec confidendum sit mihi, quia ignorans viam Dei. Desiderium meum est secundum cor meum, ut maneatis in mundo et non sitis de mundo".

99. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. W. Preger, pp. 46-47: "Nescitis, quia tenemini reddere testimonia iure divino? Et nescitis, quod maximum et fidei negocium vertitur?..... Quid? Est vobis dies posita, in qua sanabimini, quam, si preteritis, vos negligitis? Quid est, si modicum absens fueris, quod vobis decrescet? Vos non solum testis esse deberetis, sed consolator, sed promotor pro vestris fratribus Zwollensibus, quos scitis, qualiter sunt turbati..... Cavete, ne videamini fugere, qui stare debetis in acie. Numquid pro vobis et vestris pugnamus? Numquid decet et vos compugnare? Magnus promissor magni sit solutor. Non dicatur amicus gaudii sed necessitatis".

100. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 221: "Omnia cedunt pecuniae. Nummus vincit, Christus repellitur: praecipue in congregationibus".

101. G. Groote, *De Simonia*, p. 3; *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 96-97; *Raadgev. aan eene kluiz.*, p. 436.

102. G. Groote, *Protestatio de veridica Evangelii praedicatione*, ed. Th. à Kempis, *Opera*, ed. Somm., p. 782.

103. Groote divides all sources of the Christian religion of his time into four classes: (1) The Bible, which is infallible; (2) the writings of the recognized leaders of the Christian church, who had been inspired by the Holy Ghost; (3) the determinations of the doctors; (4) visions of various kinds. G. Groote, *Sermo de nativitate Christi*, fol. 109^b-110^a: "In primo ordine sunt que de Christi nativitate, vita vel morte in canonica scriptura, quibus contrarium sentire fas non est, continentur. In secundo ordine sunt que sanctis aliquibus de eisdem sunt vel dicuntur postea revelata. Tercio que assercioni doctorum vel

verisimili coniecture, vel probabili argumento, vel rationi triumphanti innituntur, ut secundum hec tria vel verisimilia vel probabilia vel rationabilia vocentur. In quarto autem ordine multa secundum et ad nostre parvitat^{is} amminiculum ymaginata et ficta modo inferius annotando assumuntur".

104. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, part 3, p. 65.

105. G. Groote, *Epistolae* (Hague Manuscript), fol. 230^a: "Sic suggestit mens, que valde unitatem desiderat; que vellet quod ambo pontifices cum omnibus cardinalibus cantarent in celi empirio 'gloria in excelsis' et alius verus Eliachim poneret pacem et unitatem in terris sed hec est hora et potestas tenebrarum".

106. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. W. Preger, p. 53: "Estimacio mea est, quod scisma hoc sine ciatrice aut, ut magis opinor, sine fistula profunda non sanabitur aut consuetur. Diu dispositum est corpus ad lapsum, sed iam caput vehementer dolemus".

107. G. Groote, *De locatione ecclesiarum*, p. 129: "Unde ista est spiritualissima negociatio. Nam solvendo aperit Presbyter coelum, et repellendo claudit. Et est etiam magna potestas celebrandi, unde a pluribus dicitur, quod Papa est potentior, quia Presbyter est, quam quia Papa".

108. *Ibid.*, pp. 120-121.

109. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, pp. 71-73.

110. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, p. 61: "Si tibi Papa vel Episcopus, vel Superior, sub quaecunque poena praeciperet, etiam sub poena excommunicationis, suspensionis, depositionis, vel privationis, ut rem sacram tangas, velut minister Ecclesiae, ved sacrum officium ut minister Ecclesiae peragas, te non contrito in mortali existente, nulla et obedientis humana debet ad hoc compellere".

111. *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65, 73.

112. *Ibid.*, pp. 68-69, 106, 82, 69, 90, 70, 54, 62.

113. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. J. G. R. Acquoy, p. 86.

114. *Ibid.*, p. 83: "Quid est hoc, quod presbyter eum absolvit in terris, qui non absolvitur in coelis? Ostendit eum ecclesiae absolutum, quem mater ecclesia immaculata non suscepit. In-
tromittitur ad extra per presbyterum, sed repellitur ab intra, quem tamen ad intus admissum presbyter, interiora ejus perscrutatus, ostendit vel dissimulat. Dicit verbo: 'Absolvo te'; dicit sibi ipsi mente contrarium".

115. Ibid., p. 83: "Credo orationem pro eis magis utilem quam regimen; item praedicationem et monitionem quam absolutionem"; p. 85: "Ergo omnino primo laborandum est ad eorum conversionem et precibus et monitionibus, imo et poenitentiarum injunctionibus, antequam ad eorum absolutionem procedatur". — Cautele confessorum circa magnos peccatores adhibendi, fol. 126^b.

116. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. G. Bonet-Maury, p. 97.

117. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. J. G. R. Acquoy, pp. 21-23.

118. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. J. G. R. Acquoy, p. 28.

119. W. Preger, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der religiösen Bewegung in den Niederlanden (1350-1400)*, pp. 62-63, p. 23.

120. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. J. G. R. Acquoy, pp. 20-32, 34-35.

121. Ibid., p. 38. — J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, p. 261.

122. W. J. Kühler, *Levensbeschrijvingen van devote zusters te Deventer*, p. 46: "Qui eciam secundum consilium magistri Gerardi multa pauperibus distribuerat".

123. G. Groote, *De simonia*, p. 10.

124. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. XVIII, § 19.

125. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 94: "Et non moveat vos, quod aliqui habeant propria".

126. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. W. Preger, p. 41: "Indigeo pecuniis. Exhaustus, Deo gracias, pene sum". — P. 37: "Everardus noster in Domino in Campis receptus indiget pecunie, vestium, et re vera non habui, ut possem sibi sicut desiderarem succurrere". Therefore Groote asks Cele to help him.

127. G. Groote, *Sermo de paupertate*, pp. 434-436.

128. D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1901, p. 422. — Th. à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. XI, § 3.

129. These passages are: Matthew XIX, 10-12; Luke XIV, 20; I. Corinthians VII, 26, 27, 35; Augustine, *Nona confessio*: "Convertisti me ad Te, ut neque uxorem quaererem".

130. G. Groote, *De simonia*, p. 13.

131. G. Groote, *De matrimonio*, pp. 174, 169.

132. Ibid., pp. 231-233, 227.

133. G. Groote, *Zed. toespraak*, p. 306.

134. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 108.

135. G. Groote, *Zed. toespraak*, p. 307.

136. Ibid., ed. G. Bonet-Maury, p. 96.

137. D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1901, p. 422. — Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. XIV, § 4.

138. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 84.

139. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. W. Preger, p. 41: "Nihil tantum proficit contra temptationem dyaboli, sicut anime hilaritas et confidencia in Domino".

140. G. Groote, *Zedelijke Toespraak*, p. 301.

141. G. Groote, *De simonia*, p. 24: "Unde under desen drien is dat hoechste geistlike guet doechde unde mynne unde is vele geistliker, dan de andere, want se den menschen geistliker maken in em selven unde gode naer verenen in den geiste, dan de tekene der sacramente of miracles of prophecies".

142. *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25: "Item de doechde syn boven doechden, de ene boven den anderen, na eren grade unde eren ambochten, unde al syn se um de mynne; unde in der mynne verenighen se uns mit gode unde mit den hilghen geiste. Als vele tilghen komen wt eenre wortelen also werden gheboren vele duechden wt eenre mynnen".

143. G. Groote, *Zedelijke Toespraak*, pp. 299-300.

144. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. XVIII, § 20.

145. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 79.

146. G. Groote, *Zed. toespraak*, pp. 303-304. See also: G. Groote, *Tractatus in divinitate super septem verba dominica*, fol. 259^c: "Dimittite et dimittetur nobis. Hec est doctrina novi testamenti. Hoc est quod Dominus in morte crucis quasi in testamenta nobis legavit ut dimittamus nobis iniuriantibus sicut ipse crucifixosibus".

147. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 80: "Domine, omnia mea et me ipsum tibi obtuli et superioribus, et me ipsum abnegavi propter te; et hoc majus est omnibus aliis, quae in mundo potui facere".

148. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. XVIII, §§ 5-6.

149. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. H. Nolte, p. 294.

150. *Ibid.*, ed. J. G. R. Acquoy, pp. 98-99; ed. H. Nolte, pp. 291-293; ed. W. Preger, p. 35.

151. *Copiarum literarum nostrarum*, in: Ms. no. 70 H 75, Royal Library, The Hague, fol. 1^a, 2^b, 3^b, 7^b.

152. P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, p. 355.

153. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. H. Nolte, p. 283; ed. W. Preger, p. 35: "Semper sum inutilis, semper garrulus, semperque avarus et peravarus librorum".

154. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. H. Nolte, p. 296. — M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 25, p. 76.

155. M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 76.

156. G. Dumbiar, *Het kerkelyk en wereltlyk Deventer*, p. 304. — M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 26. — G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. H. Nolte, pp. 290-291, p. 302. — W. Preger, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der religiösen Bewegung in den Niederlanden*, p. 39, note 1.

157. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. X, § 1.

158. M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, pp. 35-36.

159. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. J. Clarisse, pp. 22-24: "Et quomodo quis coecus aliis ducatum praebeat? Si coecos coeci ducent, coecorum omnes coeci et duces in praecipitium cadunt. Quomodo curabit scientiam, qui non habet scientiam? Et quomodo quis docere potest illud, quod nunquam didicit? Et speculatores positi sunt Curati, quoniam tenentur omnia scire, quae ad eorum officium pertinent, tanquam mundiores oculos ad omnia et longiora et densiora discernenda, et ad praemuniendum et ad defendendum habentes".

160. See p. 27.

161. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. J. G. R. Acquoy, p. 71; ed. W. Preger, pp. 38-39; ed. H. Nolte, pp. 290-291. — M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, pp. 36-37.

162. See p. 15, note 44; the translation in our text is taken from: Th. à Kempis, *Works*, vol. III: *The chronicle of the Canons Regular of Mount St. Agnes*, edited by J. P. Arthur, p. 163.

163. The translation given in our text is found in: Th. à Kempis, *Works*, vol. III: *The chronicle of the Canons Regular of Mount St. Agnes*, ed. J. P. Arthur, pp. 213-217.

164. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, ch. I, § 2.

165. J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, p. 46.

166. J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, pp. 41, 245.

167. H. Pomerio, *De origine monasterii Viridis Vallis*, p. 290.

168. D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1901, p. 412.

169. *Memoryboek der oude Zusteren te Weesp*, in: *Archief voor Nederlandsche kerkgeschiedenis*, vol. X, Leiden 1839, p. 188.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. G. Dumbar, *Het kerkelijk en wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, pp. 548-549.
2. The document is found in: J. de Hullu, *De statuten van het Meester-Geertshuis te Deventer*, pp. 63-76; a shorter one in: G. Dumbar, *Het kerkelyk en wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, pp. 549-550.
3. D. de Man, *Hier beginnen sommige stichtige punten*, p. XXXVIII. — J. de Hullu, *Statuten*, p. 67.
4. J. de Hullu, *Statuten*, p. 67.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.
6. D. de Man, *Stichtige punten*, pp. XXIX, XXX, XXXVI, XLI.
7. J. de Hullu, *Statuten*, pp. 66, 73, 67, 70.
8. See p. 23.
9. D. de Man, *Stichtige punten*, pp. LVIII, LIX.
10. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. IV, § 2.
11. Th. à Kempis, *Chron. Mont. Agn.*, ch. XI. He died in 1400 at the age of 50; hence he was born in 1350.
12. M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 18.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 18. — J. H. Gerretsen, *Flor. Radewijns*, p. 49.
14. J. H. Gerretsen, *Flor. Radewijns*, p. 49.
15. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. VI, § 2. — D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1902, pp. 1, 23.
16. J. H. Gerretsen, *Flor. Rad.*, p. 50.
17. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. IV, § 1.
18. *Ibid.*, ch. XI, § 1. — Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 12.
19. See p. 15.
20. G. Bonet-Maury, *Gérard de Groote*, p. 57.
21. J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. I, p. 45.
22. J. H. Gerretsen, *Flor. Radewijns*, pp. 60-70.
23. E. Barnikol, *Studien*, p. 32.
24. D. A. Brinkerink, *De vita venerabilis Ioannis Brinkerinck*, p. 324: "Quorum XII illi familiarius adherebant, ita ut unanimi consensu, spe vite liberioris, voto se castitatis astringerent, licet unus ex illis postea iret post sathanem. — D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1902, p. 24: "Meyster Gerijt die hadde

ynt irste XII discipele, die onsen lieven Heren hoer reynicheid laveden ende alle vuerige manne woerden ende columpne der deuchden, behalve ene; die viel weder of en sterf quader doet".

25. P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, p. 362.

26. A few cases are mentioned in the sources.

27. I do not see why we should have to reject the account by Busch. For nowhere is he so trustworthy as in his narrative relating to Groote's activities as founder of the new brotherhood. When Groote preached at Zwolle, it was his custom to stop at the house of Busch's grand-father (see: M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narratio*, p. 6, note 6); Busch was one of Cele's best friends, while Groote's confessor, named Henry of Höxter, told him a great many details about Groote's last years: J. Busch, *De ref. mon.*, p. 703: "*Dominus Henricus Huxaria, qui fuerat eius confessor, hec mihi sepius enarravit et plura alia*".

28. J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, p. 254: "*Predilecte magister! Quid noceret, quod ego et clerici isti scriptores bone iam voluntatis ea, que septimanatim habemus expendere, in unum reponentes in communi pariter viveremus? Communia? Isti de ordine mendicancium id nullatenus sustinebunt, sed totis suis viribus resistere et omnino se opponere temptabunt*".

29. J. Busch, *Chron. Windeshemense*, p. 254. — D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1901, p. 420: "*Aldus mynlic ende gesellic plach hij te wesen mit sinen discipelen, mer sij en leyden noch gheen gemeen leven toe samen. Want dat en dorste meyster Gerijt niet bestaen, om dat hij soe vele wederstaens hadde; mer hij stercte sine discipele daer seer toe, ende sechde: wert dat sijs bestaen dorsten, hij wolde hem gerne een guet hoeft wesen*".

30. J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, p. 256. — W. J. Kühler, *Johannes Brinckerinck*, p. 19. — Frensweger handschrift, pp. 22-27.

31. J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, p. 255.

32. P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, p. 362: "*Vitam tamen communem discipuli eius post mortem illius de consilio et beneplacito ipsius inceperunt*". — D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1901, p. 420: "*Ende na sijnre doet soe waert die eerweerdige meystere her florens die overste, ende doe weren sij daer allen-telen wat toe gecomen*". — R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 13: "*Dominus Florencius custodivit pecunias secum habitancium. Videns autem quod tam plene essent conversi ad Dominum et*

tam tractabiles et flexibiles, fudit pecunias eorum in unum et fecit eas esse omnium, que fuerant per partes singulorum; et ita deinceps ceperunt vivere in communi". There is one other account which ought to be of some interest to us. In Ms. no. 75 G 58 of the Royal Library at the Hague we find a treatise by Gabriel Byel or Bael, rector of the Brethren of the Common Life at Butzbach near Mainz (see: G. Coeverincx, *Analecta*, part II, ed. G. van den Elsen and W. Hoevenaars, p. 128), called: *Tractatus de communi vita clericorum*. The rector tells his readers on fol. 11^b of this treatise that Groote was unable to find good monasteries for his followers. For that reason he withheld many of them from entering a monastery. Finally he resolved to follow Augustine's example by founding a society or congregation, instructing his followers to live the "common life".

33. J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, pp. 263-264.

34. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Ger. Magni*, ch. XVI, §§ 2-3.

35. Thomas à Kempis very plainly states that Groote urged his disciples to build a monastery and join the Augustinian Canons Regular (*Vita Ger. Magni*, ch. XV, § 3). Acquoy overlooked this fact; see: W. J. Kühler, *De prediking van Geert Groote*, pp. 231-232.

36. D. A. Brinkerink, *De vita venerabilis Ioannis Brinckerinck*, p. 326.

37. D. A. Brinkerink, *De vita ven. Ioannis Brinckerinck*, p. 327: "In quotidianis igitur anxietatibus constituti magister Gerardus et sui, maturo et deliberato consilio concluserunt, se monasterium ordinis regularium S. Augustini velle construere, sub cuius alis et umbris ceteri sine approbata apostolica regula, sed in seculari habitu simplici aut clericali degentes protegerentur". — P. Horn, *Vita Gerardi Magni*, pp. 362-363: "Habuit eciam in proposito edificandi monasterium clericorum ordinis canonicorum regularium, volens quosdam de ydoneis clericis sibi adherentibus ad religionis habitum promovere, ut aliis devotis essent in exemplum et contra senientem mundum in refugii castrum religione munitum".

38. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 7. — D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1902, p. 3. — Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. X, § 2.

39. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. XIV, § 1. — D. A. Brinkerink, *Biogr.*, 1902, p. 9.

40. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. XVI, §§ 2-4.

41. *Ibid.*, ch. XIV, § 3.
42. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. I, § 1.
43. D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1902, p. 9. — Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. XIII, § 1.
44. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. XIV, § 3; ch. XV, § 3; ch. XVI, § 2.
45. *Ibid.*, ch. XV, § 3.
46. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 22. — Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. XX, § 1.
47. J. H. Gerretsen, *Flor. Rad.*, pp. 125-126.
48. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. XI, § 2, § 1; ch. XXIV, § 3. — R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 21.
49. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. XXIV, § 3.
50. *Ibid.*, ch. XVII, § 1.
51. *Ibid.*, ch. XVII, § 1, ch. XI, § 2. — D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1902, p. 19.
52. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. XVIII, § 3.
53. De magistro Everardo de Eza, in: Ms. no. 8849-8859, Royal Library, Brussels, fol. 80^a.
54. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. XVIII, § 3.
55. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 21.
56. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. XI, § 2, § 3.
57. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 21: "Aliqui civium obloquentes devotis in Daventria excusabant tamen Fratres Domus domini Florencii. Aliqui vero omnes condemnantes solum dominum Florencium collaudabant".
58. J. H. Gerretsen, *Flor. Rad.*, pp. 132-133.
59. Fl. Radewijns, *Omnes inquit artes*, fol. 1^a: Item et vie nostre finis quidem est regnum Dei. Quid vero sit scopos debet diligenter inquiri..... Finis quidem nostre professionis ut diximus regnum celorum est; destinacio vero scilicet scopos puritas cordis sine qua ad illum finem impossibile est quempiam pervenire".
60. *Ibid.*, fol. 1^a.
61. Fl. Radewijns, *Omnes inquit artes*, fol. 2^a-3^a.
62. *Ibid.*, fol. 4^b-5^a.
63. *Ibid.*, fol. 3^b-4^b.
64. Fl. Radewijns, *Tractatulus de spiritualibus exercitiis*, p. 384.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 384: "Caritas autem vera non est nisi in corde puro a viciis, et ipsa in se omnem comprehendit virtutem".

66. Ibid., p. 384: "Porro quantum homo plus purgaverit cor suum a viciis et consupiscentiis inordinatis, tanto amplius impletur virtutibus seu caritate".

67. Ibid., p. 385.

68. Ibid., p. 386.

69. Fl. Radewijns, *Omnes inquit artes*, fol. 82^a-83^b.

70. Fl. Radewijns, *Tract.*, p. 384.

71. Ibid., p. 387: "Et est recte simile in proposito de instrumento musico, cuius corde sunt indisposite, licet non destructe, quod non potest reddere bonam melodiam. Sic etiam vires et affectiones anime deordinate seu deformate sunt, licet non destructe".

72. Ibid., p. 387: "Et in hoc etiam consistit vera conversio et spiritualis, ut scilicet amor convertatur seu reformetur, ut nichil diligat nisi deum vel propter deum".

73. Ibid., pp. 392, 391, 397, 398.

74. Fl. Radewijns, *Omnes inquit artes*, fol. 18^a: "Ecce caritas excellentissima via est que ducit ad celestem patriam et sine qua illuc nemo pervenire poterit".

75. Ibid., fol. 18^b, 20^a-23^a.

76. Fl. Radewijns, *Tractatulus*, p. 413.

77. Fl. Radewijns, *Omnes inquit artes*, fol. 23^b-28^b.

78. Fl. Radewijns, *Tractatulus*, pp. 401-402. — *Omnes inquit artes*, fol. 26^{a-b}.

79. Fl. Radewijns, *Omnes inquit artes*, fol. 26^a: "Pro spiritualibus exercitiis non omnia equaliter corporalia conveniunt, sed illi que cum spiritualibus maiorem habent convenienciam et sollicitudinem de quibus inter cetera est sacram scripturam scribere".

80. Fl. Radewijns, *Tractatulus*, p. 389. — *Omnes inquit artes*, fol. 23^b.

81. Fl. Radewijns, *Tractatulus*, p. 389. — *Omnes inquit artes*, fol. 23^b: "Tota sacra scriptura est propter virtutes; et si homo haberet virtutes et inconcusse servaret, non indigeret scriptura quantum ad se, ut dicunt Augustinus et Crysostomus, quia multi sine codicibus sancte vixerunt in solitudinibus".

82. Fl. Radewijns, *Tractatulus*, p. 389. — *Omnes inquit artes*, fol. 23^b.

83. Fl. Radewijns, *Tractatulus*, p. 393.

84. Ibid., p. 395.

85. Ibid., pp. 396-399.

86. Fl. Radewijns, *Omnes inquit artes*, fol. 6^a-17^a. — *Tractatulus*, pp. 405-406, 409, 414.
87. Fl. Radewijns, *Tractatulus*, p. 404.
88. Fl. Radewijns, *Tractatulus*, p. 411.
89. *Ibid.*, p. 412.
90. *Ibid.*, p. 413.
91. *Ibid.*, p. 415.
92. *Ibid.*, p. 417.
93. *Ibid.*, p. 421.
94. *Ibid.*, p. 423.
95. About one half of the *Omnes inquit artes* is devoted to the life of Christ (fol. 28^b-62^a, and also fol. 62^a-77^a).
96. See p. 46, note 32.
97. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 13.
98. W. J. Kühler, *Johannes Brinckerinck*, p. 13.
99. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, pp. 7-8: "*Ioannes de Huxaria fuit ordinatus presbiter, sed morte preventus non celebravit missam, sepultus est..... Erat autem idem Ioannes de Huxaria tante perfectionis, quod ad tempus dubitatur an ipse vel dominus Florencius fieret rector Fratrum in Daventria: tandem convenerunt in dominum Florencium*".
100. Found in: G. Dumbar, *Het kerkelyk en wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, pp. 616-620.
101. G. Dumbar, *Het kerkelyk en wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, p. 616.
102. Much has already been written on this subject, but as has been the case with the foundation of the new brotherhood, we have hitherto been led astray by a spirit of negative criticism which distrusts all chronicle writers, even those men who lived themselves in the house at Deventer, as Thomas à Kempis did and Rudolf Dier de Muiden. Only the documents are to be trusted, these critics say, and then only a certain class of documents, — not the official ones, for these deliberately created titles of non-existing offices (see E. Barnikol, *Studien*, p. 32). Thus the whole reading public, both in Holland, Germany, and elsewhere, have been left in the dark concerning the early history of the Brethren of the Common Life. And yet the sources tell a very plain and simple story, which is in no way contradicted by a single document.
103. G. Dumbar, *Het kerkelyk en wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, pp. 603-610. — *Analecta Daventria*, vol. I, p. 224, p. 16.

104. G. Dumbar, *Het kerkelyk en wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, p. 629.

105. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, pp. 38-39. — G. Dumbar, *Analecta Daventria*, vol. I, p. 238. — Ms. no. 70 H 75, Royal Library, The Hague, fol. 13^b-14^a: "Nos Godfridus Toorn, Rodolphus de Mudén et Otgerus Johannis presbyteri et custodes domus magistri Florencii in Daventria notum facimus..... empta est cum domibus in ipsa edificatis de pecuniis deputatis ad primum usum: ad hoc ut in ipsis habitent devoti clerici vel scolares".

106. D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1902, p. 8: "Onder desen schoelres waert soe grote dissipline gehoelden, oftet reliose cloesterlude hadden geweest, ende dat overmides die goddiensstige insettinge here Florens ende sijnre devoeter bruders". See p. 45.

107. G. Dumbar, *Analecta Daventria*, vol. I, pp. 102-103.

108. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Flor.*, ch. XV, § 2. — R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 24.

109. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 24.

110. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

111. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

112. J. de Hullu, *De Hervorming in Overijssel*, p. 91.

113. This was at any rate the impression received by Thomas à Kempis (see: Th. à Kempis, *Vita J. Gronde*, ch. I, § 3).

114. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 14.

115. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 65. — D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1902, p. 11.

116. J. Badius Ascensius, *Vita Thomae Malleoli*, ch. IX. The translation given in our text is from: Th. à Kempis, *Meditation on the incarnation of Christ*, ed. D. V. Scully, pp. XXVII-XXVIII.

117. Thomas à Kempis, *Vita Arn. Scoonhoviae*, ch. II.

118. J. Lindeborn, *Historia episcopatus Daventriensis*, p. 98.

119. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 25.

120. W. J. Kühler, *Joh. Brinckerinck*, p. 21.

121. M. Schoengen, *Jacobus Traiecti narratio*, p. 500.

122. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, pp. 34, 40.

123. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

124. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

125. See p. 110.

126. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 41.

127. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Florentii*, ch. XXXV, § 1.
128. G. Dumbar, *Analecta Daventria*, vol. I, p. 99.
129. *Ibid.*, pp. 95-97.
130. *Ibid.*, p. 106: "Nescientes ad quid amplius optemus vivere, cum totiens vita nostra moriatur".
131. G. Dumbar, *Analecta Daventria*, vol. I, pp. 111-113.
132. See: G. H. J. W. J. Geesink, Gerard Zerbolt van Zutfen, p. 13.
133. Zerbolt died in 1398 at the age of thirty-one (see Th. à Kempis, *Vita Ger. Sutph.*, § 8).
134. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Ger. Sutph.*, § 2. — G. J. H. W. J. Geesink, *Ger. Zerb.*, p. 6.
135. D. A. Brinkerink, *Biographieën*, 1902, pp. 336-337.
136. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Ger. Sutph.*, § 4.
137. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Ger. Sutphan.*, §§ 5-6.
138. See my article in the *Ned. Arch. voor Kerkgesch.*, 1921, pp. 109-114; p. 118, note 7.
139. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 2^a.
140. *Ibid.*, fol. 2^{a-b}: "Si autem premissæ persone vivunt et cohabitāt simul non collegialiter vel conventualiter sive per modum et ritum seu assumptionem nove religionis sed potius per modum simplicis societatis et unionem karitatis; sic extra religionem in una domo et societate convivere et cohabitare est omnino licitum. Et hoc modo simul convivere et cohabitare est in ecclesia Dei valde consuetum, dictis et auctoritatibus sanctorum et doctorum recommendatum et a sede apostolica specialiter licenciatum". Then he gives a great many proofs and concludes: "Quare multo magis causa devocionis et pietatis in modum simplicis societatis sive collegii vel corporis constitutione convivere et cohabitare est omnino licitum et meritorium". If it were prohibited, Zerbolt continues on folio 3^a, to live the common life in private homes, the whole world would be in a state of condemnation. On fol. 3^b-4^a he shows that the common life has always been practised in the Christian Church, and approved by the pope. The common life is recommended in the Bible (Psalm 133, Job XXI, Genesis II), he finally remarks. *Ibid.*, fol. 6^a.
142. *Ibid.*, fol. 7^a-8^b. He plainly proves that to live in common as the Brethren of the Common Life did, was quite distinct from monasticism, and he concludes by saying: "Unde patet quod sola professio faciat religiosum. Nec habitus sine professione

facit aliquum religiosum..... Unde propter hoc quod habitum deferunt humilem non sunt dicendi facere aliquam religionem".

143. Ibid., fol. 8^b.

144. Ibid., fol. 10^a-11^b.

145. Ibid., fol. 10^a.

146. Zerbolt refers to the mind or reason of man before the fall, of which he still possesses a small remnant; see also p. .

147. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 10^b-11^a.

148. Ibid., fol. 11^a: "Ymmo maxima pax et quies fieret et optima rerum dispositio si tanta esset vel posset esse caritas hominum quod possent excludere proprietatem rerum, juxta illud Senece, 'De moribus'".

149. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 11^a.

150. Ibid., fol. 12^a: "Homo enim naturaliter est animal sociale ut dicit philosophus [Aristotle], primo Politice. Nullus enim homo solus sibi sufficit ad ea que sibi sunt necessaria procuranda ad victum acquirendum, coquendum, ad materiam vestitus faciendum et preparandum, etc.. Unde Stoyci dicere consueverunt quod homo esset hominum causa generatus, videlicet in adiutorium, sicut patet Genesis II^o [verse 20]: 'Ade autem non erat adiutorium simile'".

151. Ibid., fol. 12^a.

152. Ibid., fol. 12^a.

153. Ibid., fol. 12^a, 12^b.

154. Ibid., fol. 12^b: "Hoc autem modo contingit quod homines communem vitam istis temporibus solum trahunt ad religiosos ac scripturas divinas de communi vita loquentes solum de religiosis capiendas arbitrantur. Quoniam hoc tempore insuetum aut rarum est extra religionem vivere in communi, quod tamen fuit usitatissimum in fervore ecclesie primitive et postmodum longo tempore. Sed eadem ratione posset forsitan videri inhibitum multis religiosis quibus nostris temporibus quibus refrigescente caritate iniquitas omnia occupavit, est vel fieri incipit insolitum in communi vivere sine omnini proprietate. Similiter hodie multa sancti ewangelii consilia non sunt multum consueta, nec tamen ideo ea facientibus sunt minus meritoria, quomodo quis ea inter malos Dei consilia non satergit adimplere, secundum Gregorius, primo *Moralium*".

155. Ibid., fol. 12^b.

156. Ibid., fol. 12^b-13^a.

157. Ibid., fol. 13^a.

158. Ibid., fol. 13^a. Zerbolt does not seem to have been aware of the fact that the Pythagoreans were not disciples of Pythagoras.

159. Ibid., fol. 13^a.

160. Ibid., fol. 13^{a-b}.

161. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 14^a.

162. Ibid., fol. 14^a-15^a.

163. Ibid., fol. 15^b-17^b.

164. Ibid., fol. 17^b-18^b.

165. See my article on the *Super modo vivendi* in the *Ned. Arch. voor Kerkgesch.*, 1921, p. 107, p. 115.

166. Ibid., pp. 115-116.

167. F. Jostes, *Die Schriften des Gerhard Zerbolt van Zutphen*, p. 7.

168. Revius gave a few extracts from this treatise (J. Revius, *Daventria illustrata*, pp. 41-58).

169. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 19^a; see W. Preger, *Beiträge*, p. 55.

170. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 19^b-21^a. — W. Preger, *Beiträge*, pp. 55-57.

171. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 20^b. — W. Preger, *Beiträge*, p. 56.

172. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 21^{a-b}. — W. Preger, *Beiträge*, p. 58.

173. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 21^b-22^a. — W. Preger, *Beiträge*, p. 58.

174. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 22^{a-b}. — W. Preger, *Beiträge*, pp. 58-59.

175. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 22^b. — W. Preger, *Beiträge*, pp. 59-60.

176. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 22^b-24^a. — W. Preger, *Beiträge*, pp. 60-61.

177. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 24^b.

178. Ibid., fol. 25^a.

179. Ibid., fol. 25^a.

180. Ibid., fol. 25^b-26^a.

181. Ibid., fol. 26^a: "Ymmo sine hac obediencia non potest pax et concordia inter simul habitantes conservari".

182. Ibid., fol. 27^a: "Primo cum quis confitetur in necessitate laico eciam peccata mortalia quod licitum est ut patet quarto

Sentenciarum, distinctio XVII, cap. 7. Sed in hoc theologi et juriste sunt ei contrarii”.

183. Ibid., fol. 27^a.

184. Ibid., fol. 27^{a-b}.

185. Ibid., fol. 27^b.

186. Ibid., fol. 27^b-28^a.

187. Ibid., fol. 28^b: “Ex quo patet quod quantum ad hanc revelacionem peccatorum sive confessionem non sacramentalem non est necessarium requirere aliquem habentem auctoritatem clavium sed magis habentem discrecionem spirituum nec tam literatum quam expertum qui possit in omnibus temptacionibus et laqueis dyaboli hominem dirigere et premunire”.

188. Ibid., fol. 28^b.

189. Ibid., fol. 28^b-29^a: “Et ista confessio non sacramentalis quondam apud viros spirituales erat valde consueta et laudata licet nunc sit rara et multis incognita et magis est dolendum a plerisque ut illicita impugnatur”.

190. See p. 46.

191. See p. 60.

192. Dier of Muiden.

193. See p. 101.

194. G. Zerbolt, *Super modo vivendi*, fol. 29^a-31^a.

195. Ibid., fol. 32^b.

196. Ibid., fol. 33^a.

197. Ch. VII.

198. G. Zerbolt, *De spiritualibus ascensionibus*, ch. III. — *De reformatione virium animae*, ch. I.

199. G. Zerbolt, *De spir. ascens.*, ch. IV.

200. G. Zerbolt, *De ref. vir. an.*, ch. II-III.

201. Ibid., ch. III: *Cor autem purgare, nihil aliud est, quam cupiditates extinguere. Cupiditates et inordinatas concupiscencias extinguere, est vires animae reformare.*

202. G. Zerbolt, *De spir. ascens.*, ch. IV: “Ita homo anima tua rationalis, quae est dignior omnibus temporalibus creaturis, impuritatem et immunditiam contrahit ex hoc, quod rebus temporalibus subijcitur per amorem”.

203. Ibid., ch. VI-VIII.

204. Ibid., ch. V.

205. G. Zerbolt, *De ref. vir. an.*, ch. III.

206. G. Zerbolt, *De spir. ascens.*, ch. XII.

207. Ibid., ch. XIII.

208. *Ibid.*, ch. XVI.

209. *Ibid.*, ch. XVI.

210. *Ibid.*, ch. XIX.

211. *Ibid.*, ch. XX.

212. *Ibid.*, ch. XXI.

213. *Ibid.*, ch. XXII-XXIV.

214. *Ibid.*, ch. XXVII.

215. *Ibid.*: "Per humanitatem Christi ad spirituale affectum assurgere, et iam ipsum Deum per speculum in aenigmate mentalibus oculis intueri, et sic ex humanitate ad notitiam et amorem divinitatis pervenire".

216. F. Radewijns, *Multes inquit artes*, fol. 28^b-61^a: Extract from the gospel of St. John, chapter I (fol. 28^b-29^a), from Bonaventura's works (fol. 29^a), from the prophecies (fol. 29^b-30^a), the annunciation (fol. 31^b), the visit of Mary to Elisabeth (fol. 32^b), the birth of Jesus (fol. 33^b-34^b), the visit of the wise men (fol. 36^{a-b}), the presentation at Jerusalem (fol. 37^{a-b}), the flight to Egypt (fol. 38^{a-b}), the baptism (fol. 39^a), the temptation in the desert (fol. 39^b), the transfiguration (fol. 42^a-43^a), the parable of the lost sheep (fol. 43^a), the entrance into Jerusalem on Palm-Sunday (fol. 44^b), the Last Supper (fol. 49^b-50^b), Gethsemanéh (fol. 51^a-52^a), the capture of Christ (fol. 52^b), Christ brought before Caiaphas (fol. 53^a), Peter denies the Lord (fol. 53^b), Pilate (fol. 54^a-55^a), on the way to Golgotha (fol. 55^b-56^a), Golgotha (fol. 56^a-57^b), the resurrection (fol. 59^a), Christ appears to Mary and the disciples (fol. 59^b-60^a), and ascends (fol. 60^b).

217. G. Zerbolt, *De spir. ascens.*, ch. XXVIII-XL: The prophecies (ch. XXVIII), the annunciation (ch. XXIX), the life of Christ, and last supper (ch. XXX-XXXI), the passion of Christ (ch. XXXII-XXXVIII), the resurrection (ch. XXXIX), the ascension (ch. XL); see also: G. Zerbolt, *De ref. vir. animae*, ch. XXVI-XXXIII.

218. G. Zerbolt, *De spir. ascens.*, ch. XI, ch. XLVIII.

219. See p. 54.

220. In ch. LXVII of the *De spiritualibus ascensionibus* and ch. XXXIX of the *De reformatione virium animae* the blessings of manual labor are extolled, and ch. LXVIII of the *De spiritualibus ascensionibus* deals with the relations with one's superiors, equals, and inferiors.

221. See p. 65.

222. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 48.

223. See pp. 46-49; and cf. W. J. Kühler, Johannes Brinckerinck, p. 21.

224. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 13: "Ista fuit causa movens ad instituendum religiosos, quia simplici communi vita timebant sustinere persecutiones ab emulis, ut sic, aliquibus existentibus religiosis, multi fratres devoti non professi religione tuerentur seu laterent sub professis religionem".

225. J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, p. 267; cf. J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. I, pp. 64-65. The bishop, named Floris van Wevelinkhoven, signed his letter of permission on July 30, 1386; see J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. III, pp. 262-264.

226. J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, pp. 274-275. The names of first six men were: Henry Klingebijl, Henry van Wilsem, Berthold ten Hove, William Keynkamp, John à Kempis, brother of Thomas à Kempis, and Henry de Wilde. The man who was sent ahead was Henry of Höxter. Cf. J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. I, p. 66.

227. J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. I, p. 66. — J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, p. 16.

228. J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. I, p. 68, note 2.

229. *Ibid.*, p. 66.

230. J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. I, pp. 67-68.

231. *Privilegia et statuta capituli generali Windesemensis*, in: Ms. no. 78 D 55, Royal Library, the Hague, pp. 105, 205.

232. J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, pp. 280-281.

233. See: J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. I, p. 72.

234. J. Busch, *Chronicon Windeshemense*, p. 278.

235. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 342: "In illa tempora [1392] tanta caritas erat inter illos, ut bona temporalia et spiritualis congregacionis Daventriensis monasterii in Windesheim et Fontis Beatae Mariae pene erant illis communia".

236. *Ibid.*, pp. 342-343.

237. J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. I, p. 230.

238. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 28: "Iste est homo, quem quesivi, cum quo multa bona in terra operabor".

239. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

240. Ibid., p. 59. For further particulars regarding this remarkable man, see J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, pp. 35-37, 54-55, 226-244; as for the authorship of the course of religious exercises which is ascribed to him by Busch, see: J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. I, p. 161.

241. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 26.

242. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 94.

243. Ibid., pp. 95-97; see also: J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. I, pp. 244-248.

244. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 62.

245. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 99.

246. Ibid., pp. 101-102.

247. Ibid., pp. 105-107.

248. Ibid., pp. 189-191.

249. Ibid., pp. 199-203.

250. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Ioannis Gronde*, ch. II, §§ 1-2.

251. See p. 47. Cf. W. J. Kühler, *Johannes Brinckerinck*, pp. 134-135.

252. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Ioannis Gronde*, ch. II, § 3.

253. He died May 7, 1392, and was buried in Groote's grave; see: Th. à Kempis, *Vita Ioannis Gronde*, ch. II, § 5.

254. See: W. J. Kühler, *Joh. Brinck.*, pp. 15-18.

255. W. J. Kühler, *Joh. Brinckerink*, p. 11. Here he lived eight years (1384-1392). He helped to build the new brethren-house in 1391, for he was carpenter: D. A. Brinckerinck, *Biographieën*, 1902, p. 25. His character has been strikingly portrayed in the following passage from the pen of a modern Dutch historian: "Met rijke gaven toegerust, en onvermoeid deze te werk stellend tot heil van anderen; praktisch van aanleg, met een scherp blik op menschen en toestanden; meester van het woord en indrukwekkend door zijn krachtige persoonlijkheid; streng zonder hardheid en in zijn ernst niet geheel zonder humor; godvruchtig bovenal, tegelijk van diepen ootmoed en kinderlijk vertrouwen vervuld — was hij boven velen de man om den vromen zin en den redelijken ernst te leiden en te versterken" (W. J. Kühler, *John. Brinck.*, p. 7).

256. W. J. Kühler, *Joh. Brinck.*, p. 34.

257. Ibid., pp. 34-36.

258. D. A. Brinckerink, *Biographieën*, 1902, p. 30.

259. W. J. Kühler, *Joh. Brinck.*, p. 38.

260. See: D. de Man, Hier beginnen sommige stichtige punten, pp. LV-LX, 6, 11, 12, 225, 240, etc.

261. W. J. Kühler, Joh. Brinck., p. 37.

262. D. A. Brinkerink, Biographieën, 1902, p. 26: "Onder die heilige susteren toe Meyster-Gerijthshuys was alsoe groten vuer des Heiligen Geestes ontsteken, dat al dat lant hieromtrijnt daer warm van waert, ende dat overmides der leer ende anwisinge hoers vaders here Iohan Brynckerinck".

263. W. J. Kühler, Joh. Brinck., pp. 38-39.

264. W. J. Kühler, Joh. Brinck., p. 51.

265. Ibid., pp. 53-56.

266. Ibid., pp. 57-58.

267. On the 21st of January, 1408, the dedication took place, and in 1412 it joined the general chapter of Windesheim (W. J. Kühler, Joh. Brinck., p. 67, p. 72).

268. M. Schoengen, Die Schule von Zwolle, pp. 46, 47. — Jacobus Traiecti narratio, pp. 6, 17, 27.

269. M. Schoengen, Jacobus Traiecti narratio, p. 14.

270. Ibid., p. 6.

271. Ibid., pp. 7-8; p. 8, note 3.

272. Ibid., p. 9.

273. Ibid., p. 9, note 2; p. 280.

274. Ibid., p. 9. For a biography on John Ummen, see: W. J. Kühler, Joh. Brinck., p. 34. — M. Schoengen, Jac. Traiecti narratio, p. 7, note 2. — D. de Man, Stichtige punten, p. 196.

275. M. Schoengen, Jac. Traiecti narratio, pp. 22-23, 216-217.

276. Ibid., pp. 25, 219.

277. Ibid., pp. 28, 219, 293-294. The observation made here by Schoengen on p. 28, note 5 is not correct, for the document he refers to was not dated September 17, but August 9 (see pp. 293-294 of the same work, where the document itself is found).

278. M. Schoengen, Jacobus Traiecti narratio, pp. 219-220, and 28.

279. Ibid., p. 59, note 3.

280. See p. 37.

281. Ten letters, addressed by Groote to Cele, are still in existence. They were edited by W. Preger.

282. J. Busch, Chron. Wind., p. 209.

283. M. Schoengen, Die Schule von Zwolle, p. 83.

284. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 209. — M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 38.

285. See p. 12.

286. M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 97.

287. W. Preger, *Beiträge*, p. 14.

288. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 213: "Ut autem exemplar et formam bone vite et sancte conversacionis seipsum preberet discipulis, incepit a seipso Christum in hoc imitatus non docens sermone, que prius opere non fecisset".

289. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 214.

290. *Ibid.*, p. 214.

291. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 217.

292. M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 70.

293. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 220: "Et quia multos sacre pagine libros sibi comparaverat dicens Dei testamentum in libris sanctis consistere et sanctam matrem nostram ecclesiam fidem catholicam spem futuri seculi celestis nostre patrie hucusque per libros in esse conservatas et sine ipsis diu periclitatas".

294. W. Preger, *Beiträge*, p. 14.

295. M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 87.

296. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 206.

297. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 206.

298. Cele was not only a great friend and admirer of the brethren, but he is to be regarded as one of the members of the local institution, although he did not live in their house. The following passage by John Busch, one of his teachers, is significant: "In habitu exteriori moribus et conversacione magistro Gerardo Magno domino Florencio et patribus congregacionum per omnia se fecit similem..... Qui et suos discipulos similiter incedere verbo docuit et exemplo" (J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 213). Furthermore, he was a sort of supervisor of the brethren at Zwolle, or guardian, as appears from certain documents: M. Schoengen, *Jacobus Traiecti narratio*, p. 294: "Hier waren over ende an, doe dit gheschiede, meyster Johan Cele, scoelmeyster to Zwolle, ende Albertus van Wynberghen". — J. H. Hofman, *De broeders van 't gemeene leven*, in: *Arch. voor de gesch. van het aartsbisdom Utrecht*, vol. II (1875), pp. 243-244. — M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. 300.

299. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 206.

300. See: M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 107.

301. *Ibidem*. As for the two other innovations, mentioned

by Schoengen, Cele's modern biographer (Dr. Schoengen is archivist at Zwolle), namely the special emphasis on religious instruction, particularly exegesis, and the improved course of instruction mapped out by Cele for future clergymen. I have made some mention of these in the text above. See also: M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 95.

302. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 208.

303. M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, pp. 75-76. — J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 207.

304. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 207: "Et tunc eciam notabilia quedam dicta sanctorum in futurum clericis profutura per totam scolam pronunciavit singulis ad sua rapiaria cuncta scribentibus. Unde epistolas et evangelia in festis per annum occurencia omnes habere voluit et rapiarium theologicale, quo nucleum scripture sacre brevibus in verbis colligerent, et ita successive Dei noticiam timorem et sapienciam novis testis memorie facilius commendarent".

305. J. Busch, *Chron. Wind.*, p. 206, p. 217.

306. *Ibid.*, p. 220. — J. H. Hofman, *De boekerij van St. Michiel te Zwolle*, pp. 387-389.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. See p. 50.
2. Ch. V.
3. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 60: "Perseveretis in statu nostro. Licet enim status Monachorum secundum ecclesiam est perfectior; tamen si quis in humili statu perfecte vixerit premium perfecti hominis recipiet".
4. *Ibid.*, p. 55, p. 53.
5. See p. 61.
6. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 54.
7. See p. 111.
8. See p. 110.
9. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 52.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 59, p. 61.
11. G. Dumbar, *Analecta Daventria*, vol. I, p. 117: "In libris placebat illi Fratrum studiositas, sed valde trahebat Fratres ad libros magis devotos et morales..... Felicis (inquit) memorie Frater Iohannes Vos, prior in Wyndesem, solebat Fratres suos refrenare a studio librorum sancti Thome et ceterorum similium modernorum scholastice de obedientia et materiis similibus tractantium, volens ut permanerent in simplicitate sua".
12. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
14. See my article in: *Ned. Arch. voor Kerkgesch.*, 1921, p. 125, note 1.
15. G. Dumbar, *Anal. Dav.*, vol. I, p. 114.
16. See Ch. VII.
17. G. Dumbar, *Anal. Dav.*, vol. I, p. 173: "Ipse nempe Legatus commendavit statum, privilegia pro munimento obtulit, et Canonicatum cum privilegiis Fratribus dare voluit, sed dominus Egbertus simplicitatis amator acceptare rennuit, ne a primitivorum Patrum et Fratrum praeposito discederet, quorum vox esse consuevit: 'Quia in humilitate nostra memor fuit nostri, et redemit nos ab inimicis nostris'".
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 173-175.
19. At least this is the impression I have from the many times I heard that remark when a school boy there.

20. G. Dumbar, *Analecta Daventria*, vol. I, p. 177.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 162.
22. A list of these rectors is found in: G. Dumbar, *Het kerkelyk en wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, p. 620.
23. G. Dumbar, *Anal. Dav.*, vol. I, p. 238. In 1484 the brethren secured the "*Antiqua Domus*" in exchange for another. See: G. Dumbar, *Het kerkelyk en wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, pp. 611-612.
24. G. Dumbar, *Het kerkelyk en wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, pp. 610-614, pp. 631-633. — *Anal. Dav.*, vol. I, pp. 40-41, p. 227.
25. G. Dumbar, *Anal. Dav.*, vol. I, p. 167, p. 228. — *Het kerkelyk en wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, p. 610.
26. G. Dumbar, *Het kerkelyk en wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I, pp. 631, 634, 636. — J. de Hullu, *De Hervorming in Overijssel*, p. 76, p. 93.
27. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, pp. 49-51.
28. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. 42.
29. See: M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. 233, n. 1, p. 64.
30. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, pp. 64, 69, 70, 72, 76, 78.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 62, p. 58.
32. D. A. Brinkerink, *Van den doechden der vuriger susteren*, pp. 314-315.
33. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, pp. 108-112, 428.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 127: "*Postea cum esset vir late caritatis et sicut Apostolus dicit, quantum in ipso fuit, cum omnibus amicitiam et pacem habere volens et providere bona, non solum coram Deo, sed et coram omnibus hominibus. Jam rector factus, invitavit scabinos ad prandium, semel puto omnes, sepius aliquos, quatinus essent amici et fautores nostri et domus nostre. Sed et omnes vicarios similiter invitavit ad prandium. Sed ut experiebatur et experti sumus omnes, nichil taliter profecimus, quia scabini exinde nobis magis favorabiles et fideliores fuerunt, et vicarii a nobis corrigi noluerunt*".
35. *Ibid.*, pp. CCXIII-CCXIV.
36. See p. 91.
37. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. 639.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 638. — M. Van Rhijn, *Wessel Gansfort*, pp. 32-34.
39. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. 125.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 640.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 279-404.
42. G. Dumbar, *Het kerkelyk en wereltlyk Deventer*, vol. I,

p. 626. — W. F. N. van Rootselaar, Amersfoort (777-1580), vol. I, p. 449. — Amersfoort, Geschiedkundige bijzonderheden, vol. II, pp. 7-8.

43. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, pp. 54-55. — G. H. M. Delprat, *Verhandeling over de broederschap van G. Groote*, p. 120. — M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. 18, n. 5, where a bibliography for the history of this house is given.

44. G. H. M. Delprat, *Verhandeling over de broederschap van G. Groote*, pp. 119-120.

45. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, pp. 482 and 32; on p. 32, n. 5, is a bibliography.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 484, pp. 30-31; p. 30, n. 1 has a fairly good bibliography.

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79; p. 78, n. 3 has a bibliography.

48. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. 84, n. 3.

49. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, pp. 84-85, p. 84, n. 8. — R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 76. — Chronicle of the brethren-house at Doesburg, p. 6.

50. H. O. Feith, *Het klerkenhuis en het fraterhuis te Groningen*, pp. 10-12. — M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. 101. — M. van Rhijn, *Wessel Gansfort*, p. 30, p. 30, n. 5. — E. H. Roelfsema, *De fraters en het fraterhuis te Groningen*, pp. 30-31.

51. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. 485, p. 99, u. 99, n. 5.

52. H. Gysbertszoon, *Kronyk van het fraterhuis te Gouda*, pp. 10-13, 14, 16. The house was not recognized, however, till 1456: H. Gysbertszoon, *Kronyk*, p. 7, p. 22, p. 45.

53. J. J. Dödt van Flensburg, *De stichtingsoorkonden van het Utrechtsche fraterhuis*, pp. 90-92. — G. H. M. Delprat, *Verhandeling over de broederschap van G. Groote*, p. 151. — S. Muller, *Catalogussen, Stads-archief*, part I, p. 123.

54. H. D. J. van Schevichaven, *Oud Nijmegens kerken, kloosters, gasthuizen, stichtingen en openbare gebouwen*, p. 100. — G. H. M. Delprat, *Verhandeling*, p. 161.

55. R. Doebner, *Annalen und Akten der Brüder des gemeinsamen Lebens im Lüchtenhofe zu Hildesheim*, pp. 95, 98-100, 103, 105, 111, 115-116, 271.

56. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 54. — K. Loeffler, *Neues über Heinrich von Ahaus*, p. 234. — L. Schmitz-Kallenberg, *Monasticon Westfaliae*, p. 56.

57. K. Loeffler, *Heinrich von Ahaus*, 1909, p. 778. — *Neues über Heinrich von Ahaus*, p. 238. — *Gedächtnisbuch Kölner*

Brüderhaus, p. 5. — Das Fraterhaus Weidenbach zu Köln, pp. 104-105.

58. K. Loeffler, Heinrich von Ahaus, p. 782. — E. Barnikol, Studien zur Geschichte der Brüder vom gemeinsamen Leben, p. 47.

59. E. Barnikol, Studien, p. 63.

60. Ms. No. VII, 3305, Staatsarchiv, Münster, pp. 3-5, 69-71. — Ms. No. VII, 3307, Staatsarchiv, Münster, p. 130. — L. Schmitz-Kallenberg, Monasticon Westfaliae, p. 34. — E. Barnikol, Studien, p. 66.

61. E. Barnikol, Studien, p. 71. — A. Wolters, Reformationsgeschichte der Stadt Wesel, p. 13. — K. Loeffler, Heinrich von Ahaus, p. 780. — Neues über Heinrich von Ahaus, p. 239.

62. R. Doebner, Annalen, pp. 3 and 259. — J. Busch, De reformatione mon., p. 545. — E. Barnikol, Studien, p. 98.

63. K. Loeffler, Das Fraterhaus Weidenbach, p. 111.

64. G. C. F. Lisch, Geschichte der Buchdruckerei in Mecklenburg. — R. Doebner, Annalen, pp. 263, 264, 266, 281, 286, 307, 315. — A. Hulshof, Verslag van een onderzoek te Rostock, pp. 38-41.

65. R. Doebner, Annalen, pp. 192-193, 288, 292, 314, 317. — O. Scheel, Martin Luther, vol. I, pp. 70-97. — E. Barnikol, Luther in Magdeburg und die dortige Brüderschule, pp. 12-13.

66. R. Doebner, Annalen, pp. 267, 279-282.

67. Ibid., pp. 25, 166-171, 184, 188-190, 266, 317.

68. G. H. M. Delprat, Verhandeling, p. 183.

69. O. Meyer, Die Brüder vom gemeinsamen Leben in Württemberg.

70. Thus we read in the Chronicle of the brethren-house at Doesburg on p. 104: "Sciendum est enim quod ex domo fratrum in Noviomago novella domus fratrum inchoata fuerat in Kempone" [Kempen].

71. M. Schoengen, Jac. Voecht narr., pp. 134-135.

72. G. H. M. Delprat, Verhandeling, p. 175.

73. J. Lindeborn, Historia sive notitia episcopatus Daven-
triensis, p. 115.

74. Letter by Pope Eugene IV, in: Ms. no. 16515, Royal Library, Brussels, fol. 2^b. — G. H. M. Delprat, Verhandeling, p. 178.

75. G. H. M. Delprat, Verhandeling, p. 180.

76. Ibid., p. 180.

77. M. Godet, *Le congr. de Montaignu*, p. 114. — G. H. M. Delprat, *Verhandeling*, p. 181.
78. Vita Joh. Hatten, in: *An. Daventria*, vol. I, p. 182.
79. J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. III, p. 101. — G. H. M. Delprat, *Verhandeling*, p. 170.
80. G. H. M. Delprat, *Verhandeling*, p. 181.
81. The "House of Master Gerard"; see p. 43.
82. The "Lammenhuis", founded in 1390: H. F. Heussen and H. van Rijn, *Oudheden en gestichten van het bisdom Deventer*, vol. I, p. 305.
83. The "Buyskenshuis", founded in 1405: H. F. Heussen and H. van Rijn, *Oudh. en gest. van Dev.*, vol. I, p. 309.
84. The "Kerstkenhuis"; for a bibliography on this house see: D. de Man, *Hier beginnen sommige stichtige punten*, p. 58, note d.
85. The "Brandeshuis"; for a bibliography on this house see: D. de Man, *Hier beginnen sommige stichtige punten*, p. 87, note a.
86. See: M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. XV.
87. H. F. Heussen and H. van Rijn, *Oudheden en gestichten van Deventer*, vol. II, pp. 196, 197, 480, 24, 517, 427, 574. — *Oudheden van Utrecht*, vol. II, pp. 443, 629. — W. Moll, *Kerkgeschiedenis van Nederland*, vol. II, part 2, p. 176. — M. Schoengen, *Het Weduwenhuis te Doesburg*, pp. 388-390. — *Jac. Voecht narr.*, pp. XV, 69, 48, 77, 81, 82 n. 2, 89, 129, 145, 197, 208. — S. Muller, *De moderne devotie te Utrecht*, pp. 25-30. — R. Doebner, *Annalen und Akten*, pp. 263 (Ahlen), 258-260 (Borken), 264 (Büderich), 259 (Calcar), 260 (Coesfeld), 256-258 (Dinslaken), 76-78 (Eldagsen), 259 (Essen), 259 (Volkmarsen), 261 (Groll), 261 (Herford), 256 (Schüttorf), 259 (Wesel), etc. — L. Schulze, *Brüder des gemeinsamen Lebens*, (1897), p. 487; (1914), p. 262.
88. D. de Man, *Hier beginnen sommige stichtige punten*, pp. LIII, 35, 45, 90.
89. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
90. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
91. *Ibid.*, p. 85.
92. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. XV.
93. See p. 90.
94. J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. III, p. 75. — W. F. N. Rootselaar, *Amersfoort (777-1580)*, vol. I, p.

451. — Amersfoort, *Geschiedkundige bijzonderheden*, vol. II, p. 9.
95. W. F. N. van Rootselaar, Amersfoort (777-1580), vol. I, p. 461.
96. *Ibid.*, p. 477.
97. *Ibid.*, p. 486.
98. H. F. van Heussen en H. van Rijn, *Oudheden en geschichten van het bisdom Deventer*, vol. I, p. 210.
99. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. 18, note 5.
100. J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. III, p. 127. — M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narratio*, p. 37. — *Privilegia, capituli Windesemensis*, fol. 320^a-321^b.
101. H. Gysbertszoon van Arnhem, *Kronyk van het fraterhuis te Gouda*, ed. A. H. L. Hensen, p. 27: "Eo quod pro paupertate et parvitate loci ipsis patribus animus non erat ad fundandam congregacionem clericorum".
102. See note 52.
103. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narratio*, pp. 134-138, pp. 493-496.
104. W. Moll, *Kerkgeschiedenis van Nederland*, vol. II, part 3, p. 96.
105. Constitution of the house at Zwolle, in: M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.* pp. 240-241. — Constitution of the house at Deventer, in: Ms. no. 73 G 22, Royal library, the Hague, fol. 1^b-2^b.
106. Constitution of the house at Zwolle, pp. 241-242. — Constitution of the house at Deventer, fol. 2^b-3^d. The selection and arrangement of the subject matter was the work of Florentius Radewijns, for not only does the prologue of the constitution in use at Deventer explicitly state that the written rules of this constitution were the same as those practised in the house at Deventer before, but in the extracts we have of Radewijns' rules, the same subjects are arranged exactly in the same way as found in the written constitution. See: D. J. M. Wüstenhoff, *Florentii parvum et simplex exercitium*, p. 96. It was not Theodore Herxen, rector of the house at Zwolle, therefore, who composed the chapter on meditation, as Schoengen believes (M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. CXL), but Florentius Radewijns.
107. Constitution of the house at Zwolle, pp. 242-243. —

Constitution of the house at Deventer, fol 3^a-4^b. — Hildesheim constitution, p. 241.

108. Zwolle const., p. 244: "Tunc enim per devotam meditationem, et compassionem Dominice passionis, et per pias affectiones, quasi ad spirituales communionem nos debemus preparare".

109. Zwolle const., pp. 244-245. — Deventer const., fol. 6^b-7^b. — Cf. Hildesheim const., p. 241.

110. Zwolle const., p. 245. — Deventer const., fol. 7^b-8^b. — Cf. Hildesheim const., pp. 239-240.

111. Zwolle const., p. 246. — Deventer const., fol. 8^b. — Cf. Hildesheim const., p. 241.

112. Zwolle const., pp. 246-247. — Dev. const., fol. 10^a-b. Theodore Herxen composed a series of Dutch sermons, filling two bulky volumes (see p. 106), made especially for the citizens of Zwolle. Of the brethren at Gouda we read that they frequently addressed the people in the vernacular. One of the brethren would read a passage from the Scriptures, while another would explain and comment upon this passage: H. Gysbertsz. van Arnhem, Kronyk van het fraterhuis te Gouda, p. 44.

113. Zwolle const., pp. 247-248. — Dev. const., fol. 10^b-11^a.

114. Zwolle const., p. 248. — Dev. const., fol. 11^a-12^b.

115. Zwolle const., pp. 248-250. — Dev. const., fol. 12^b-14^b.

116. Zwolle const., pp. 250-252. — Dev. const., fol. 14^b-16^b.

117. Zwolle const., pp. 252-255. — Dev. const., fol. 19^a-20^b.

118. Zwolle const., pp. 255-257. — Dev. const., fol. 16^b-18^b.

119. Zwolle const., pp. 257-258. — Dev. const., fol. 20^b-21^b.

120. Zwolle const., pp. 258-259. — Dev. const., fol. 25^b-26^a.

121. R. Doebner, Annalen und Akten, pp. 225-226, 227-231, 233-235. — G. Boerner, Die Annalen und Akten, pp. 76-86; and p. 87: "Das Generalkapitel oder die Union von Münster ist 1499 zustande gekommen, und deshalb sind auch die Unionsstatuten in diesem Jahre errichtet".

122. Zwolle constitution, pp. 259-260. — Deventer constitution, fol. 26^a-28^a. — M. Schoengen, Jac. Voecht narr., pp. LVI-LVIII. — M. A. G. Vorstman, Stukken betreffende de Broeders des Gemeenen Levens, pp. 79, 81, 115, 133.

123. R. Doebner, Annalen und Akten, pp. 214-215.

124. Zwolle const., pp. 260-261. — Dev. const., fol. 28^a-29^a. — Hildesheim const., pp. 243-245.

125. Zwolle const., pp. 262-263. — Dev. const., fol. 30^a-34^b. —

See also: M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. CLXXXVII; for the German houses, see: R. Doebner, *Annalen und Akten*, pp. 218-222.

126. *Zwolle const.*, pp. 263-264. — *Dev. const.*, fol. 35^a-36^a. — *Hildesheim const.*, pp. 222-223.

127. *Zwolle const.*, pp. 264-265. — *Dev. const.*, fol. 36^{a-b}. — *Hildesheim const.*, pp. 236-238.

128. *Zwolle const.*, pp. 265-266, p. 268. — *Dev. const.*, fol. 37^b-38^a, 40^{a-b}. — *Hildesheim const.*, pp. 235-236.

129. *Zwolle const.*, p. 265. — *Dev. const.*, fol. 36^b-37^b. In the rules laid down by the "Colloquium" of Münster, nothing is said about this subject, for in the year 1499 and after, more attention was paid to mechanical rules than the acquisition of virtues. This may at least be said of the constitutions drawn up by the Brethren of the Common Life in Germany.

130. *Zwolle const.*, pp. 266-268. — *Dev. const.*, fol. 38^a-40^a. — Cf. *Hildesheim const.*, pp. 238-239.

131. The Sisters of the Common Life also had constitutions. The first one, drawn up by Groote in 1379, was followed in due time by more elaborate ones, among which the one used at Münster has recently been made more accessible in printed form (see: W. E. Schwarz, *Studien zur Geschichte des Klosters Marienthal*, pp. 112-126).

132. W. J. Kühler, *Levensbeschrijvingen van devote zusters te Deventer*, pp. 27, 53-54. — D. de Man, *Stichtige punten*, pp. I, 7, 12, 64, 225, 240. — Rector Peter Dieppurch's discourses, in: R. Doebner, *Annalen und Akten*, pp. 144, 145.

133. D. de Man, *Stichtige punten*, pp. 19, 88, 123, 63, 114, 133, 154, 186, p. 6, note b, p. 109, note c, p. 112, note c; pp. XLVIII, 52, 122, 160, 58, 151, 189. — Rector R. Dieppurch's discourses, in: R. Doebner, *Annalen und Akten*, p. 149.

134. D. de Man, *Stichtige punten*, p. 176.

135. That the Sisters of the Common Life were very fond of reading biographies is indicated in: D. de Man, *Stichtige punten*, p. LXXI.

136. D. de Man, *Stichtige punten*, pp. LXXIV, XLIX, 27, 90, 193, 199, 206, 233, 252-253.

137. M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. 277.

138. D. de Man, *Stichtige punten*, pp. 16-17.

139. See p. 105.

140. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 65. — D. de Man, *Stichtige punten*, p. LV, p. 129.

141. J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. II, pp. 301-302.

142. D. de Man, *Stichtige punten*, p. LV, p. 37, note b, p. 51, note a.

143. Th. à Kempis, *Vita Luberti*, § 36. — R. Dier, *Scriptum*, p. 64. — W. J. Kühler, Joh. Brinckerinck, pp. 34 and 36. — D. de Man, *Stichtige punten*, pp. LI-LII, p. LIV. — J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. II, p. 290, note 7.

144. D. de Man, *stichtige punten*, p. 49, note d. — W. J. Kühler, Joh. Brinckerinck, p. 34. — R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 64. — M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. 223.

145. R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 28. — W. J. Kühler, Joh. Brinckerinck, p. 36. — D. de Man, *Stichtige punten*, p. 34, note b, p. LIV. — D. A. Brinkerink, *De vita Joh. Brinckerinck*, p. 344.

146. D. de Man, *Stichtige punten*, p. L.

147. See: Deventer constitution, fol. 16^b-18^b. — Zwolle const., pp. 255-257. — Hildesheim constitution, pp. 232.

148. Hildesheim constitution, pp. 234-235: "*Sollicitus sit, ut debito tempore diligenter et munde coquenda praeparet et, ne quid crudum vel intemperatum fratribus offeratur, solerter caveat, hospitario etiam et infirmario benignum se exhibeat*".

149. R. Dier, *Scriptum*, p. 70.

150. See p. 53.

151. See pp. 117-118.

152. See pp. 124-134.

153. To the negative criticism of Acquoy and Hirsche many theories have been added from time to time. Hence it has become very difficult to read modern Dutch, German, French, and English writers without getting one's views bemuddled by the opinions of authorities which were copied verbally by their followers, even in Holland.

154. According to a legend invented about a century ago it was Florentius Radewijns, the first rector of the Brethren of the Common Life at Deventer, who taught in the school of St. Lebwin's, wherefore his followers also were induced to imitate his example. It now is a well-known fact in Holland that Florentius Radewijns never taught school at all, nor did any one of the brethren at Deventer act as rectors of the cathedral

school or as assistants for a great many years after his death. And yet the legend is still believed in by many students in England and France, wherefore attention should be called to this side of the truth also. On the other hand the writer would warn against going to the other extreme of refusing to find any interest in education among Groote's disciples at Deventer. Radewijns had been too intimate a friend of Groote not to have felt the need of better teachers and better schools. See: M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, pp. 24-25, and especially *Th. à Kempis, Vita Florentii*, ch. XXIV, § 2.

155. J. H. Gerretsen, *Florentius Radewijns*, pp. 67-70.

156. M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 19.

157. See p. 36; cf. M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 11, note 1, and p. 19.

158. M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, pp. 17-18.

159. See pp. 92-97.

160. W. F. N. Rootselaar, *Amersfoort*, vol. II (1898), p. 12.

161. E. Barnikol, *Luther in Magdeburg*, p. 56.

162. See p. 114.

163. P. Opmerus, *Martyrum Batavicornum*, p. 152 (quoted in: D. van Bleysweyck, *Delft*, p. 520): "A duodecim ingenuis adolescentibus gratuito habitatur, qui severis constricti legibus ad perdiscendas liberales disciplinas Scholam publicam quae in proximo est, frequentant".

164. D. van Bleysweyck, *Delft*, p. 519: "Gelegen 't eynde de Schoolstraet achter aen Stads-wallen en recht tegen over 't voorbeschreve Oude Weduwenhuys van Charitaten, opgerecht om eenige Latijnsche Scholieren, die van geen middelen en nochtans van goede apparentie en naerstigheyt waren te alimenteren en in de Studie tot den Kercken-dienst op te trecken". — Speech made by Theodore Graviae, prior of Windesheim, in the brethren-house at Delft: "Insuper id quod studetis refundere potestis in iuvenibus, qui apta sunt vasa ad Dei gratiam suscipiendam (found in: J. G. R. Acquoy, *Het klooster te Windesheim*, vol. III, p. 331). — S. W. A. Drossaers, *Archieven van de Delftsche statenkloosters*, p. 322.

165. *Chronicle of the Brethren-house at Doesburg*, pp. 38, 46, 84.

166. Henric van Arnhem's *Kronyk van het fraterhuis te Gouda*, p. 40: "Et tunc dominus Cornelius suos retraxit fratres, excepto quod dominus Jacobus Naeldwije usque in annum

sexagesimum permanere permissus est. Qui satis fideliter egit in omnibus pro ista domo, tanquam membrum hujus fuisset, et precipue in regendo scholas in domo, unde satis bonum lucrum habuimus et gratiam atque amicitiam bonorum hominum quorum filios bene informavit in disciplinis scolasticis et bonis moribus..... In principio antequam scholas habebamus et sic favorem hominum acquirebamus..... fratres..... in multis deficiebant". P. 45: "Et alia pars subdivisionis erat camera, in qua unus erat lectus repositus pro hospitibus recipiendis, in qua, quia alius locus non fuit, scholas, habebant scholares et commensales hic visitantes".

167. H. F. van Heussen and H. van Rhijn, *Oudheden van Deventer*, vol. I, p. 216.

168. J. van Waasberge, *Beschrijving van Geraartsbergen*, vol. II, p. 37.

169. Provincial archives, Groningen, 1511, no. 23. "Wy Borgemester en Raed in Groningen betugen mit desen openen brewe voer ons en onse nakomelingen dat wij tot vereweringhe vordernisse ende behulp der guder leringhe der scholers in onser stat ter eren Goedes puerlike om Goedes willen hebben opgedragen en overgegeven..... den pater en broders des convents des fraterhuses"..... (the Brethren of the Common Life are to get a part of the city wall on condition that they build a house on it and instruct children). — H. G. Feith, *Het klerkenhuis en het fraterhuis te Groningen*, appendix no. VI, p. 19: "De conventualen..... sullen altoes voer ogen hebben, dat selve huis, eersts geinstituteert ende de guederen daer to van beginne sint gegeven gewest, om de ioeget toe leeren, toe institueren ende te tuchtigen ende voorts in de wetenheit van kunsten unde disciplinen unde in de kentnisse Goedes Almach-tich unde sine godtlijcke deensten geoeffent te worden, om aldaer een christelijck anvoetsel ende seminarii der heijlliger kercke op te richten".

170. H. F. van Heussen and H. van Rhijn, *Oudheden van Deventer*, vol. I, p. 215. Several references are given here, from one of which it appears that often more than 1200 pupils were attending the school of the Brethren of the Common Life in that city. Cf. J. Lindeborn, *Historia episcopatus Daventriensis*, p. 132; G. Bonet-Maury, *De opera scholastica fratrum vitae communis*, p. 80. See particularly: Gysberti Coeverincx, *Analecta*, part II, ed. by G. van den Elsen and W. Hoevenaars, p. 82.

171. L. Kückelhahn, *Johannes Sturm*, pp. 9, 10-13. — G. Bonet-Maury, *De opera scholastica*, p. 90.
172. E. Barnikol, *Luther in Magdeburg*, pp. 3-18, p. 60.
173. E. Wintzer, *Die Schule der Kugelherren in Marburg*, pp. 161-163. — E. Barnikol, *Luther in Magdeburg*, pp. 56-59.
174. H. D. J. van Schevichaven, *Oud-Nijmegens kerken*, pp. 101, 103-105.
175. G. C. F. Lisch, *Geschichte der Buchdruckerkunst in Mecklenburg*, p. 36. — B. Lesker, *Die Rostocker Fraterherren*, pp. 147-148.
176. A. Dekker, *De Hieronymusschool te Utrecht*, pp. 8-59. — W. Moll, *Kerkgeschiedenis*, vol., II, part II, p. 245. — S. Muller, *Catalogussen, Stads-archief*, part I (1913), p. 123.
177. M. Godet, *Le Congrégation de Montaigu*, p. 3.
178. The Brethren of the Common Life conducted a very flourishing school at Hulsbergen, according to Dr. Moll (W. Moll, *Kerkgeschiedenis*, vol. II, part II, p. 244). At Harderwijk also they had a very good school: H. Bouman, *Geschiedenis der voormalige Geldersche Hoogeschool*, vol. I, pp. 6-11.
179. *Consilium Joannis Sturmi*, in: G. Bonet-Maury, *De opera scholastica*, p. 90: "Leodii, Daventriae, Zwollae, Vuasaliae literarum exercitationes habent, eisque unum assignatum locum, distributum suis ordinibus, atque ex illis ludis feliciora et plura plerumque prodeunt ingenia quam ex vicinis, ut vocant, Academiis".
180. I. J. van Doornink, *Bouwstoffen voor een geschiedenis van het onderwijs in Overijssel*, part IX (1888), p. 98. — M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, pp. 110-111.
181. M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 116. — I. J. van Doornink, *Bouwstoffen*, part IX, p. 98.
182. M. Schoengen, *Die Schule von Zwolle*, p. 119.
183. *Ibid.*, pp. 120-121.
184. M. van Rhijn, *Wessel Gansfort*, p. 37.
185. See p. 97.
186. W. Dillenberger, *Al. Hegius*, pp. 483-484. 'This village is situated in the "Kreis" of Ahaus, about four miles south-east of Gronau, and six miles from the present Dutch frontier.
187. H. E. J. Vandervelden, *Agricola*, p. 80.
188. P. S. Allen, *Opus ep. Erasmi*, vol. I, p. 580, n. 23.
189. *Ibidem*.
190. J. Butzbach, *Auctarium*, p. 231.

191. W. Dillenburg, *Al. Hegius*, p. 490.

192. W. Gansfort, *Opera omnia*, preface, where among other references this letter is found: Alexander Hegius doctissimo atque praestantissimo M. Wesselo Groningensi, qui *Lux Mundi*: "Mitto tibi, vir praestantissime, Homilias Ioannis Chrysostomi Non enim decet me quidquam habere quod tecum non communicem Sequutus sum consilium tuum, pernitiola enim literatura est, quae enim iactura probitatis discitur. Vale, et siquid me facere voles, mihi significato, et factum putato. Ex Daventria". This letter is also found in the *Dialogi* of Hegius.

193. L. Geiger, *Renaissance und Humanismus*, pp. 391-392.

194. A. Hegius, Letter to Gansfort: "Fui, ut nosti, in Cusana bibliotheca. Illic reperi multos Hebraicos libros, mihi prorsus ignotos: ex Graecis autem pauciores inveni".

195. In one section of his *Dialogi* he includes a great many statements about grammatical constructions, written in the dialect of Westphalia and Overijssel.

196. D. Reichling, *Murmellius*, p. 11.

197. A. Hegius, *Dialogi* (1503), fol. 82^b.

198. D. Reichling, *Murmellius*, p. 13.

199. J. Butzbach, *Auctarium*, p. 238.

200. He died on December 27, 1498.

201. J. Butzbach, *Auctarium*, p. 239.

202. *Ibid.*, p. 239. — Cf. L. Geiger, *Renaissance*, p. 393.

203. P. S. Allen, *Opus ep. Erasmi*, vol. I, p. 118. — J. Lindeboom, *Bijb. humanisme*, p. 77. — J. Lindeboom, *Bijb. hum.*, p. 70. — H. E. J. Vandervelden, *Agricola*, p. 81, p. 144.

204. J. Butzbach, *Auctarium*, p. 220.

205. *Ibid.*, p. 236.

206. J. Lindeboom, *Bijb. hum.*, p. 70.

207. Cf. J. Lindeboom, *Bijb. hum.*, p. 121. — W. Moll, J. Brugman, vol. II, p. 79: "En wat zag Brugman in deze Deventersche mannen, waarom hij hun zulk een veelbeteekenenden lof toezwaaide? De gansche inhoud van den brief leert het: hij zag in de discipelen van Meester Geert en Heer Florens trouwe dienaren van God, die met Christus riepen: 'Laat de kinderkens tot ons komen, opdat zij knapen en jongelingen onderwezen in hetgeen een godvruchtig mensch te doen en te laten heeft' (see: J. Brugman, *Epistolae*, ed. W. Moll, p. 216: "O fratres mei cordialissimi, de facili ab exercitiis necessariis parvulis studentulis

averti nolite! A propagacione filiorum Christi cessare ne velitis"! — Frederic van Baden, bishop of Utrecht, Epistola (1514), ed. M. A. G. Vorstman, p. 126: "Sed palmites vestros in decorem domus ejus in diversis ecclesiis et monasteriis extendatis, scholares de rudi saecula colligendo et bonis moribus et Dei timore instituendo et fovendo, sicque religiosis domibus et ecclesiis habilitando". — Philip of Burgundy, bishop of Utrecht, Epistola (1517), ed. M. A. G. Vorstman, p. 130: "Odor boni nominis vestri..... multiplexque fructus, quem in ecclesia sua per vos efficit Dominus, nos hortantur et admonent, quo favoribus vos prosequamur opportunis". — J. Butzbach, Auc-tarium, p. 237: "Ex quo [Hegius' 'gymnasium'] maxime tamen nostra in his Germaniae partibus in aptis litteratura personis ab initio reformationis suae, quae nondum ad centesimum in aliquo pervenisse monasterio perhibetur annum, foveri et enutriti meruit". — F. Jostes, Johannes Veghe, p. XXI: "Dabei tasten Sie jedoch weder diese [use of indulgences] noch eine andere kirchliche lehre im prinzip an, vielmehr suchen sie diese immer nur von dem überwachsenden aberglauben zu befreien und die damit getriebenen missbräuche zu beseitigen". — K. Loeffler, Heinrich von Ahaus (1909), p. 763: "Der Geist der Bruderschaft ist die innerliche Erneuerung und Vertiefung des christlichen Lebens, die 'devotio moderna'". — H. Hermelink, Die religiösen Reformbestrebungen des deutschen Humanismus, p. 9: "Ihre [Brethren of the Common Life] geschichtliche Aufgabe war nicht nur die Schaffung einer kirchlichen Laienkultur auf religiös-innerlichster Grundlage, sondern ihre von der Kirche genehmigte und unterstützte Organisation diente gegen Ende auch zur Verbreitung der eigentlich humanistischen Bewegung in den Niederlanden und in Norddeutschland". — P. Mestwerdt, Die Anfänge des Erasmus, p. 134.

208. D. Reichling, Murmellius, p. 9.

209. Cf. D. Reichling, Ortwin Gratius, pp. 60-81. — L. Geiger, Renaissance und Humanismus, p. 429. — L. Geiger, Reuchlin, pp. 248-252. — J. Lindeboom, Bijb. humanisme, pp. 106-108.

210. J. G. de Hoop Scheffer, Geschiedenis der Hervorming in Nederland (1870), p. 28.

211. J. Geny, Geschichte der Stadtbibl. zu Schlettstadt, p. 18.

212. G. C. Knod. Aus der Bibl. des B. Rhenanus, p. 4. — J. Knepper, Jacob Wimpfeling, p. 6.

213. Vol. I, p. XIV.

214. Aus der Bibl. des B. Rhen., pp. 5-6.
215. G. C. Knod, Aus der Bibl. des Beatus Rhenanus, p. 7.
216. L. Geiger, Ren. und Hum., p. 388.
217. G. C. Knod, Bibl. des Beat. Rhen., pp. 8-12.
218. Ibid., p. 4.
219. J. Knepper, Das Schulwesen in Elsass, p. 330: "Es sagt genug, dass sein erstes Schulzöchlein erbauliche Natur war: eine Erklärung der sieben Busspsalmen nach Gregor dem Grossen". It may be of interest to note that the first selections from the Bible translated by Gerard Groote into the vernacular were those very same penitential psalms.
220. G. C. Knod, Bibl. des Beat. Rhen., p. 16, note 4.
221. See p. 99.
222. J. B. Nordhoff, Denkwürdigkeiten, p. 122.
223. D. Reichling, Murmellius, p. 27. — Die Reform der Domschule zu Münster, p. 32. — A. Parmet, Rudolf von Langen, pp. 67-69.
224. Cf. A. Bömer, Das lit. Leben in Münster, p. 43. See also: D. Reichling, Die Reform, p. 27.
225. See: K. Löffler, Das Fraterhaus Weidenbach in Köln, p. 101, p. 103.
226. See: D. Reichling, Die Reform, p. 20.
227. A. Bömer, Der Münstersche Domschulrektor Timann Kemner, p. 184.
228. D. Reichling, Murm., p. 1, p. 3.
229. Ibid., p. 45, p. 69.
230. J. Lindeboom, Bijb. hum., p. 92.
231. D. Reichling, Murmellius, p. 44.
232. Ibid., pp. 42-43.
233. See: D. Reichling, Die Reform, p. 65.
234. L. Geiger, Ren. und Hum., p. 397. — D. Reichling, Murmellius, p. 47.
235. See: D. Reichling, Murmellius, pp. 46, 48-69, 88-94, 98-115. On pp. 132-165 a list of his works is given.
236. L. Geiger, Ren. und Hum., p. 398.
237. D. Reichling, Murmellius, p. 101.
238. D. Reichling, Die Reform, p. 69-70.
239. Ibid., pp. 74-75. — D. Reichling, Die Humanisten J. Horlenius u. J. Montanus.
240. See: A. Egen, Der Einfluss der Münsterschen Domschule auf die Ausbreitung des Humanismus.

APPENDIX A

THE REFERENCES CITED BY GROOTE

On page 17 a list is found of the writings to which Groote refers in his various works. This same list is given here again, provided with a number of notes. The references in question are the writings of Albert Magnus¹, Ambrose², Anselm³, Antony⁴, Apuleius⁵, Aristides⁶, Aristotle⁷, Augustine⁸, Bede⁹, Bernard¹⁰, Boethius¹¹, Bonaventura¹², Cassianus¹³, Cato¹⁴, Chrysostom¹⁵, Cicero¹⁶, Climacus¹⁷, Cyprian¹⁸, Demosthenes¹⁹, Diogenes²⁰, Dionysius²¹, Eusebius²², Fabricius²³, Francis of Assisi²⁴, Gregory²⁵, Gregory of Nianza²⁶, Henry of Ghent²⁷, Hippocrates²⁸, Isidor²⁹, Jerome³⁰, Juvenal³¹, Lucan³², Lyra³³, Nepos³⁴, Permenianus Donatista³⁵, Peter of Damiani³⁶, Plato³⁷, Pliny³⁸, Seneca³⁹, Socrates⁴⁰, Suetonius⁴¹, Suso⁴², Theophrastus⁴³, Thomas Aquinas⁴⁴, Valerius⁴⁵, Vegetius⁴⁶, Virgil⁴⁷, and the Canon Law with many commentaries⁴⁸.

1. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, p. 55.
2. G. Groote, *De locatione ecclesiarum*, p. 128. — *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 214. — *Epistolae*, ed. H. Nolte, p. 291. — *Septem verba dominica*, fol. 263 c.
3. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 75.
4. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 180. — *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 72.
5. G. Groote, *Sermo de paupertate*, p. 463.
6. G. Groote, *De locatione ecclesiarum*, p. 143.
7. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, pp. 199, 211, 224, 230, 236, 245. — *De simonia*, p. 8, p. 10. — *Epistolae*, ed. W. Preger, p. 35.
8. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 1st part, p. 366, 3rd part, pp. 7, 8, 17, 28, 38, 58, 77, 78, 79, 97. — *Tractatus de matrimonio*, pp. 167, 170, 171, 177. — *De locatione ecclesiarum*, p. 130. — *De simonia*, pp. 14, 20, 24. — *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 84; ed. H. Nolte, pp. 291, 292, etc. — *Tractatus super septem verba dominica*, fol. 262^a, 263^c, 265^a, 266^a, 266^b, 268^a. — *De nativitate Domini*, fol. 113^b, 117^b, 119^b.
9. G. Groote, *De simonia*, pp. 21, 22. — *Epistolae*, ed. W. Preger, p. 49. — *Tractatus super septem verba dominica*, fol. 267^a.
10. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, pp. 13, 20,

21, 22, 46, 56, 57, 58, 70; 1st part, pp. 373, 376. — *Tractatus de matrimonio*, pp. 164, 239. — *Epistolae*, ed. J. Clarisse, pp. 9, 23, 25, 27. — *Tractatus super septem verba dominica*, fol. 112^a, 128^a, 131^b. — *De nativitate Domini*, fol. 264^d, 265^e, 266^{a-b}, 267^{b-c}.

11. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 1st part, p. 368; 3rd part, pp. 29, 30, 34. — *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 183, p. 208.

12. G. Groote, *De nativitate Domini*, fol. 112^a.

13. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 194.

14. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 170. — *De locatione ecclesiarum*, p. 143.

15. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, pp. 30, 34. 35. — *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 179. — *De simonia*, p. 22.

16. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 237.

17. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 75.

18. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, p. 104.

19. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 246.

20. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 213.

21. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, p. 56. — *De locatione ecclesiarum*, p. 121. — *Epistolae*, ed. J. Clarisse, pp. 19, 23, 24; ed. X. de Ram, p. 73. — *De nativitate Domini*, fol. 111^b, 127^a, 129^a, 130^b.

22. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, p. 47.

23. G. Groote, *De locatione ecclesiarum*, p. 143.

24. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 1st part, p. 378. — *Tract. de matrimonio*, p. 191.

25. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, pp. 7, 10, 20. — *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 161. — *De simonia*, pp. 14, 20, 25. — *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 72; ed. W. Preger, p. 51; ed. J. Clarisse, pp. 22, 25. — G. Groote, *Tractatus super septem verba dominica*, fol. 263^b, 264^a.

26. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 230.

27. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. W. Preger, p. 42.

28. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 73; ed. W. Preger, p. 41.

29. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. H. Nolte, p. 291.

30. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, pp. 9, 45, 46, 55, 67, 68, 69, 78. — *Tractatus de matrimonio*, pp. 161, 202. — *Epistolae*, ed. J. Clarisse, p. 8; ed. W. Preger, p. 43. — *De simonia*, p. 22. — *De nativitate Domini*, fol. 131^b. — *Tractatus de septem verba dominica*, fol. 266^a, 260^b, 261^d.

31. G. Groote, *Tractatus de septem verba dominica*, fol. 266^a.

32. J. Clarisse, Over den geest en de denkwijze van Geert Groote, in: *Archief voor Ned. Kerkgesch.*, vol. VIII, p. 368.
33. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. W. Preger, p. 43.
34. J. H. Gerretsen, Florentius Radewijns, p. 40.
35. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, pp. 73, 99.
36. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, p. 101.
37. G. Groote, *De locatione ecclesiarum*, p. 143.
38. J. H. Gerretsen, Florentius Radewijns, p. 40.
39. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 218, p. 239, p. 240.
— *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, p. 7. — *De locatione ecclesiarum*, p. 143. — *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 81; ed. H. Nolte, p. 291.
40. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 213, p. 236. — *De locatione ecclesiarum*, p. 143.
41. G. Groote, *Sermo de paupertate*, p. 463.
42. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. W. Preger, p. 35; ed. X. de Ram, p. 106.
43. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, pp. 170, 232, 244.
44. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, p. 54, p. 80.
— *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 74. — *De simonia*, p. 4.
45. G. Groote, *Tractatus de matrimonio*, p. 170. — *De locatione ecclesiarum*, p. 143.
46. G. Groote, *Epistolae*, ed. X. de Ram, p. 71.
47. G. Groote, *Sermo contra focaristas*, 3rd part, p. 50.
48. J. Clarisse, Over den geest en de denkwijze van Geert Groote, in: *Archief voor Ned. Kerkgesch.*, vol. III, pp. 60-84.

APPENDIX B

GROOTE'S LETTERS

Since many of these letters have remained unpublished, and the others were edited mostly in a haphazard way, a list is given here, showing how many were published, and where they can be found. This list was prepared chiefly by Rev. A. A. J. Karthon, a Roman Catholic pastor at Heusden, Holland, with whom the author had the pleasure to become intimately acquainted. Rev. Karthon had intended to edit all of Groote's unpublished works, but death claimed him in the summer of 1921. And although the author now has a copy of these unpublished works, it may take one or two years before they will appear in print. The following list, therefore, may prove helpful to many readers.

EPISTOLAE COGNITAE GERARDI MAGNI

A. In Codice Hagae Comitum no. 78 J 55 et alibi (Leodii, Hannoverani, Coloniae Agrippinae, Romae, Bruxellis, etc.).

Wolfenbüttel, Vindebonensis,

Praenotamen. Series manuscripti Hagae Comitum hic ut norma habetur. In Bibliotheca Universitatis Leodii simile manuscriptum (no. 366) invenitur. Numeratio epistolarum paululum differt.

Numerus	Destinatio vel contentum breve	Folia	Edita per scriptorem	Non edita	Annotationes
	Protestatio Gerardi Magni	113a—113b	Th. a Kempis (ed. Sommalii, Duaci 1635) p. 914.	—	
1.	Ad Guillelmum Salvarvillam	113b—117b	Clarisse A. V. K. G. VIII	1	Etiam per Bonet-Maury MSum Hannoveranum secutus. Valde incorrecte edita.
2.	Ad Bertholdum ten Hove	117b—118b	285-287 sed Valde incomplete.	—	
3.	Ad Abbatissam S. Clarae in Colonia	118b—119b	.....	2	Hae tres epistolae agunt de eodem objecto etiam epistola 29.
4.	Ad Dominum Henricum de Lippia, cantorem S. Severini in Colonia	119b—120b	.....	3	
5.	Litterae recommendationis pro ingressu alicujus sororis nobilis in monasterio	120b—121a	.....	4	
6.	Ad Carthusianos in Confluentia	121a—122a	.....	5	De ordinando aliquem (Flor. Radewijns?) in presbyterum.
7.	Ad Fratres in Campen	122a—122b	Acquoy, Ep. V.	—	
8.	Ad Abbatem in Campen	122b—123b	.....	6	
9.	Ad Fratres in Campen	123b—124a	.....	7	
10.	Ad Abbatem in Campen	124a—125b	.....	8	Cfr. Ep. 53; contentum hic compendiose pro parte idem.
11.	Ad Guillelmum Vroede	126a—129b	Nolte, Ep. III.	—	Theol. Quartalschrift Tübingen 1870.
12.	" "	129b—131a	Preger 7.	—	Abhandlungen der bayr. Akademie 1894 Abt. I.
13.	" "	131a—132b	Nolte Ep. IV valde incorrecte.	—	
14.	De beneficio curati minori non deferendo	132b—134b	Acquoy Ep. XII.	—	

Numerus	Destinatio vel contentum breve	Folia	Edita per scriptorem	Non edita	Annotationes
15.	Ad Praepositum de Eemsteyn pro Bertholdo ten Hove	134b—135b	Clarisse l. c. VIII p. 287-289. Incorrecte.	—	
16.	Ad Patres in Groenendaal	135b—136b	Pregre 15.	—	
17.	Ad Wernerum Keynkamp	136b—137b	Acquoy Ep. VI.	—	
18.	Ad Stephanum pro tunc curatum in Lochem	137b—139a	Acquoy Ep. VII.	—	
19.	Epistola Salvarvillae Urbano Papae de Gerardo Magno	139a—140a	Thomas a Kempis p. 926. Acquoy Epistolae p. 59.	—	Hac duae epistolae non sunt Gerardi, sed agunt de eo.
20.	Testimonium Salvarvillae	140a—140b	Thomas a Kempis p. 913.	—	
21.	Ad Johannem Cele	140b—141b	Pregre 12, Nolte VII.	—	
22.	Ad episcopum Florentium	141b—142b	Acquoy Ep. III.	—	Ut ep. 7 et hae duae agunt de fratre Bartholomaeo haereseos suspecto.
23.	Ad Florentii Vicarium	142b—143a	Acquoy Ep. VI.	—	
24.	Ad Fratres Harderovicenses contra Johannem Heyden	143a—144a	Acquoy Ep. VIII.	—	
25.	Ad Fratrem Carthusianum infirmum in capite, etc.	144a—147b	Clarisse l. c. III, Aant I, p. I-4.	—	
25. ^a	Responsum cuidam juveni volenti accipere beneficium	148a—154b	Clarisse l. c. III, Aant 3, p. 13-27.	—	Numerus 25 in Ms. Hag. Com. per errorem bis occurrit.
26.	Ad Praepositum in Eemsteyn	155a—155b	Nolte VII.	—	
27.	De Oppugnando errorem (tenebras) et spargendo veritatem (lumen)	156a—156a	.....	9	
28.	Ad quendam Lapsum (Gherlacum)	156a—161a	.....	10	
29.	Ad Arnoldum de Celaren	161a—162a	.....	11	De eodem objecto (ac epistolae 3, 4, 5).
30.	Ad Dominum Bernardum	162a—164a	Acquoy Ep. VIII.	—	
31.	Ad Salvarvillam	164a—166a	Pregre 16.	—	
32.	Ad Ruysbroec	166a—168a	Pregre I.	—	
33.	De Correptione Auditorum	168a—171a	Acquoy Ep. IX.	—	

Numero	Destinatio vel contentum breve	Folia	Edita per scriptorem	Non edita	Annotationes
34.	Litterae recommendationis ad quoddam monasterium pro Magistro Ricoldo	171a—172a	.....	12	
35.	Ad Dominum Johannem Stiefvader in Campen	172a—173b	.....	13	
36.	Ad Guilhelmu Oude Scute, etc.	173b—175b	Preger 13.	—	
37.	Ad Dominum Johannem de Gronde	175b—180a	Acquoy Ep. X.	—	
38.	Nobillis ep. excitans ad patientiam et imitationem Christi	180a—187a	De Ram. In Compte Rendu de la Commission Royale d'Histoire 1861 Ep. IV.	—	Exemplare hujus epistolae invenitur in permultis Europae bibliothecis, ob praeclaram doctrinam saepe transcripta.
39.	Ad Guilhelmu Salvarvillam	187a—198a	.....	14	
40.	Ad Dominum Henricum Clingibile de Huxaria	198a—201a	Busch Chron. etc. C. 30 Clarisse l. c. III, Aant 2, pp. 5-11; VIII p. 277-281.	—	
41.	Ad novum Monachum	201v—204v	De Ram l. c. Ep. III.	—	
42.	Ad quemdam Magistrum Canonicum pro fratribus de Eemsteyn	205a—205b	.....	15	Cfr. ep. 26. Verosimilius agitur de eadem re.
43.	Ad Johannem de Gronde	205b—207a	Preger 14.	—	Cfr. Nolte p. 294.
44.	Ad Dominum Johannem de Gronde	207a—208b	.....	16	
45.	Ad Johannem calumniantem	208b—209b	Acquoy Ep. I.	—	
46.	Ad Regnerum Curatum Swollensem de Bartholomaeo	210a—211a	Acquoy Ep. II.	—	
47.	Ad Dominum Henricum de Scoenhove de Gouda	211a—215b	Acquoy XI.	—	
48.	Ad quemdam Beneficiatum de restitutione ei facienda	215b—216a	.....	17	
49.	Ad Rudolphum de Entere	216a—221a	Acquoy XIV.	—	

Num- rus	Destinatio vel contentum breve	Folia	Edita per scriptorem	Non edita	Annotationes
50.	Ad Guilhelmum Salvarvillam de Schismate	221a—230	.....	18	Haec epistola etiam inventur Viennae in bibliotheca olim regia dicta: n. 4923, fol. 192a-196a; etiam Romae.
51.	Responsum ad Fratres quoad quaedam dubia circa proprietarios	230a—233a	.....	19	
52.	Ad Abbatum in Campen	233a—239a	De Ram, l. c. Ep. VII.	—	Bibl. Vat. lat. n. 4927, fol. 137a-143a.
53.	Ad quandam sororem in Christo de proprietate monialium	239a—243a	.....	20	Idem contentum ac ep. 10 sed magis fuse.
54.	Exhortatio ad quandam olim valde et adhuc multum dilectum ad fugiendum peccatum et aemulandum virtutem.	243a—248a 248a—249a	De Ram, l. c. Ep. VIII. De Ram, l. c. Ep. V.	— —	
55.	Suo novitio Mathiae de Tyle	249a—250b	De Ram, l. c. Ep. VI.	—	
56.	Exhortatio ad quandam monachum ut firmus in votis permaneat	250b—252a	Preger 9.	—	
57.	Ad Johannem de Cele	252a—254a	" 3.	—	
58.	" " "	254a—257b	" 5.	—	
59.	" " "	257a—258b	" II.	—	
60.	" " "	259a—259b	" 2, De Ram, Ep. II.	—	
61.	" " "	259b—259b	" 4, Nolte V.	—	
62.	" " "	259z—260a	" 8, Nolte p. 295.	—	64 et 65 — Leodii 65.
63.	" " "	260a—260b	" 6.	—	
64.	" " "	261a—262a	" 10, Nolte p. 295.	—	
65.	" " "			—	
B. Epistolae non in Codice					
		Hagae Comititis, sed alicubi nempe Parisiis, acquisitions Latines, M. S. no. 1250.			Bibl. Nat. Nouvelles
	Ad quemdam multipliciter temptatum.	59c—63a	.....	21	In quantum scio, solum Parisiis invenitur haec epistola.
	Ad quemdam, qui praeest monialibus contra detractionem.	63a—65a	.....	22	Invenitur etiam Leodii, in Bibliotheca Universitas no. 191 (390); Liber Conventus Sanctae Crucis Leodiensis fol. 222a-224a. Ultima verba vero hic desiderantur.

APPENDIX C

THE ORIGINAL CONSTITUTION OF THE BRETHREN
OF THE COMMON LIFE AT DEVENTER

This constitution is found in Ms. no. 73 G 22 of the Royal Library at the Hague. It may seem strange that no one has ever thought of examining it carefully. Schoengen calls it the constitution of a house founded by the brethren at Zwolle (M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. CXXVII, p. CXLIX), and suggests that the one found in Ms. no. 70 H 79 of the Royal Library at the Hague, which contains but a few brief and incomplete rules, was written and used by the brethren at Deventer (M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, p. 59, note 3). But why should the men who founded all the other houses, either directly or indirectly, have had to be content with only a small fragment of the constitution in use at Zwolle, which had been copied after their own constitution, as Schoengen himself admits (M. Schoengen, *Jac. Voecht narr.*, pp. CXXXIV—CXL)? Moreover, it is not very difficult to prove that Ms. no. 73 G 22, Royal Library, The Hague, contains the constitution of the "Domus domini Florentii" at Deventer, for: (1) On fol 43^b we find that the brethren were to pray for their friends at Delft, where in 1403 a house had been founded by the "Domus domini Florentii". (2) The only other houses which could be expected to offer such prayers were those of Gouda and Utrecht, but on the same page of our manuscript the word Gouda was added in a later hand, while the house at Utrecht was founded as late as the year 1474, long after this constitution was written. (3) The prologue refers to Pierre d'Ailly's letter of recognition, which was given in 1413, for in that same year the cardinal visited the Yssel valley as papal legate, and granted some privileges to the Sisters of the Common Life at Deventer; this letter of approbation encouraged them, they said, to draw up their rules in writing, as practised in their house before; in the cardinal's letter of approbation only the houses of Deventer, Zwolle, and Münster are mentioned by name, and even if they all had been enumerated there, only one of them would be found to have direct relationship with the house at Delft. (4) The brethren at Deventer prayed for their friends at Delft, simply because these friends were members of their own house.

The rector of the brethren at Delft had been procurator of the "Nova domus" at Deventer (see: R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum* p. 54). So close were the relations between Deventer and Delft that in 1458, when R. Dier de Muiden wrote his *Scriptum*, he said, in speaking of the house at Delft: "Cornelius is rector there" (see: R. Dier de Muiden, *Scriptum*, p. 55). No other houses were mentioned by name in the constitution, except the one at Delft, hence this constitution certainly could never have been drawn up in a daughter-institution of the house at Zwolle.

(5) Of Petrus Horn, a member of the house at Deventer, we read that he never had to ask forgiveness for having fallen asleep beside his candle; our constitution explicitly demands the asking of forgiveness in such cases, which clause is not found in other constitutions known to us (see: G. Dumberg, *Anal. Dav.*, vol. I, p. 152, and the constitution, fol. 47^a).

